

A
T R U E S T A T E

Of the DIFFERENCES subsisting between

T H E P R O P R I E T O R S

O F

COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE;

IN ANSWER TO

A False, Scandalous, and Malicious MANUSCRIPT LIBEL,
exhibited on Saturday, Jan. 23, and the two following Days;
and to a PRINTED NARRATIVE, signed by T. Harris and
J. Rutherford.

By G E O R G E C O L M A N.

THE SECOND EDITION.

L O N D O N,

Printed for T. BECKET, in the Strand; R. BALDWIN, in Paternoster-Row; and
R. DAVIS, the Corner of Sackville-street, Piccadilly.

MDCCLXVIII.

Although the following State of our Case has been
drawn up by Mr. COLMAN, I desire to be considered
as equally responsible for its Contents.

WILLIAM POWELL.

ADVERTISEMENT.

Feb. 10, 1768.

ON Thursday last, after I had begun to prepare these Papers for the Press, my friend Mr. Rice, between whom and Mr. Rutherford a very serious difference had that day been brought to a happy conclusion, intreated me, in the most earnest terms, at least to suspend my Publication; as he had yet hopes, by his present influence with Mr. Rutherford, to accommodate our differences. I consented, and went the next morning to Richmond, where I received the following letter from Mr. Rice, the contents of which induced me to resume my thoughts of publication; and indeed, rendered it incumbent on me to expedite it as much as possible; which I hope will be some apology for the apparent haste and inaccuracy of the following Narrative. The attention due to it must, however, depend upon facts. Mr. Rice's letter is as follows; and is published at his own request.

“ Dear Colman,

“ YOU may remember that I acquainted you before you went out of town, that the moment the affair of last Thursday was over, I thought it a very proper opportunity to avail myself of the situation I then stood in, and told Mr. Rutherford the only advantage I would wish to make of the many advantages I had then given him, would be to render myself the instrument of bringing about a thorough reconciliation in the Theatre: Mr. Rutherford replied, that nothing in the world would give him greater pleasure; and that he should be the happiest man living if those disputes were once settled. From the many compliments Mr. Rutherford paid me on this occasion, and the very conciliating disposition he was then in, I really was weak enough to believe him sincere. I saw him the same evening at the Playhouse, and we agreed to meet the next day at Mr. Harris's in Surry-street. If you recollect, I begged you not to proceed in your Publication. I went to Mr. Harris's at the time appointed, and to my great surprize found only Mr. Harris, who made an apology for Mr. Rutherford's not being there, but said that Mr. Rutherford would meet me any where in the evening, if I would leave word where I was to be found. I mentioned the Bedford Coffee-house. Mr. Harris's conversation and mine was rather general, as I told him that my business was with Mr. Rutherford; that I thought I had a claim upon that gentleman, and meant to use it to make all the Patentees friends; and that I should make a point of Mr. Rutherford's using his influence with *him* to bring about a reconciliation of all parties. Though Mr. Harris did not seem so well disposed to a compromise as Mr. Rutherford, yet he did not give me the least reason to expect the *manœuvre* of this morn-

(4)

morning. In the evening I went to the Bedford Coffee-House, and found the inclosed note * for me there; and when I went home I found a duplicate of it: I did not go to Mr. Rutherford's this morning, but waited to see him in Villiers-Street. In the mean time, the Publick Advertiser was brought me as usual, when, to my very great astonishment, I saw their Narrative advertised. Mr. Rutherford came at the time appointed in his note. It was with great difficulty I could keep my temper with him; and I told him, in the presence of Mr. Allen and a Hairdresser, that I did intend to say a great deal to him, but that the very disingenuous manner he had dealt with me, had put it out of my power to have any thing to say to him or his friend Mr. Harris; adding, "Had you told me, or even sent me word yesterday, that my interfering was quite unnecessary, as your Case was to be published this morning, I am sure I could not have been in the least offended; but, instead of that, you consented to confer about an accommodation, and concealed your intention of publishing your Narrative: Such disingenuous treatment from you I thought I did not deserve. I now renounce you both for ever, and think you a couple of people capable of doing every thing that is bad." He said, he was very sorry for my ill opinion of him; but declared, notwithstanding what had passed, that any thing I had to say in this dispute, should have more weight with him than the remonstrances or arguments of any other person. I intend to come to Richmond, and dine with you to-morrow."

Saturday Evening,
Feb. 6, 1768.

I am, Dear COLMAN,

Most affectionately yours,

WOODFORD RICE.

* Mr. RUTHERFORD's Note.

"Mr. Rutherford's most friendly compliments wait on Capt. Rice.—Was extremely sorry that he could not wait on him in Surry-Street to-day;—but will be very happy to see him in Newman-Street, to-morrow at ten, to breakfast.

"If that should prove inconvenient to him, and he should not hear from him, will call in Villiers-Street, about twelve."

Friday Evening,
9 o'Clock.

INTRODUCTION.

BEFORE I enter upon my Narrative, it may not be improper to acquaint the Publick with the reasons that have induced me to give them this trouble ; and to shew them that silence must have been interpreted as a tacit acknowledgment of guilt in myself and Mr. Powell, who could not forbear to reply to the most gross and open calumnies, if we entertained a proper regard for our reputations, and wished to be considered as men who held their good name “ as the immediate jewel of their souls.”

Contempt of slander is indeed an heroick quality, and conscious innocence is the surest antidote to its poison. But there are circumstances wherein the world has a kind of right to arraign our conduct ; not to mention, that it requires a very uncommon share of philosophy not to refute scandal and malice, when we have the means of justification in our power.

On Saturday, the 23d of January, we were informed that there lay for publick inspection, at Slaughter's Coffee-house, in St. Martin's-lane, a manuscript paper, wherein we were charged, in direct terms, with the most infamous collusion in the management of the Theatre ; a collusion intended to promote our own separate and private emolument, and consequently to defraud Mess. Rutherford and Harris, the joint-sharers in the property.

Notwithstanding those two gentlemen had for some preceding weeks betrayed the most hostile disposition toward us, and endeavoured to render the management of the Theatre as hazardous as it is troublesome ; yet that they, or their friends, should think it advisable to appeal to the Publick, by drawing up a partial state of our differences, seemed almost incredible. In the evening, however, we repaired to the Coffee room, and on a perusal of the libellous paper in question, we found it to be more replete with falshood, scandal, and malice, than it had even been represented to us ; nor indeed was it possible for any person, not minutely acquainted with the facts, to discern how much they were distorted in order to give the least colour to the charges brought against us.

* The paper was conceived in the following terms:

A short state of the case between THOMAS HARRIS, JOHN RUTHERFORD, GEORGE COLMAN, and WILLIAM POWELL.

"THE patents, &c. of Covent Garden Theatre, being to be sold, pursuant to the direction of the late Mr. Rich's will; Thomas Harris and John Rutherford formed a design of purchasing them, and entered into a treaty with the executors of said Rich; but afterwards thought proper to invite some one person conversant in these matters to share with them in the purchase; one who might strengthen the company as a performer, and assist them in the management thereof.—They pitched upon William Powell the player, to whom the plan was communicated.—At first his only objection was, an article subsisting between him and the patentees of Drury Lane Theatre; but he afterwards, in his own mind, got over that difficulty, and proposed a friend of his, George Colman, a dramatic author; and urged the expediency of admitting him into the treaty, by greatly exaggerating the service he would do in assisting the Theatrical Management.—At length Harris and Rutherford agreed, not only to the admission of William Powell, but also his friend George Colman. Whereon, March 31st, 1767, these four gentlemen entered into articles of agreement between themselves, for concluding such purchase; and Harris and Rutherford were empowered to conclude the treaty they had begun on their own account, and the four parties were to be equal sharers.

"April 1st, Harris and Rutherford contracted for the purchase, and 10,000 l. the property of Harris and Rutherford, was deposited on that day, the remainder of the 60,000 l. to be paid the 1st July next ensuing. And soon after, all four parties met on the subject of their future articles, when Colman proposed to have the uncontrouled management, which Powell approved; but Harris and Rutherford, (being exceedingly surpris'd) warmly, and reiteratedly, protested they never would consent to any other articles, but such as would give them a perfect equality of power with Colman. Whereupon, after much deliberation, the four gentlemen, on 14th May last, signed an agreement, by which Colman was appointed acting manager, with this restriction, that he was from time to time, and at all times, to communicate and submit his conduct, and the measures he should intend to pursue, unto Harris and Rutherford, who were empowered to put a negative on any such measure which they should jointly disapprove.

"Powell was to give his advice and assistance when required.

"May 28th, Powell was engaged as an actor for seven years, at 400 l. a year, and a clear benefit; and if any performer, or player, should be allowed more, then an additional charge was to be allowed Powell, so as to exceed such future player. 2d, None of the parties should have any concern in any other theatre.

July 1st, The contract with Rich's executors was compleated, and the money then paid; but Colman and Powell were deficient in their proportion of purchase-

* It was indorsed, "A narrative of transactions relative to Covent Garden Theatre." And at some distance was written, in another hand, "For the use of the gentlemen of Slaughter's Coffee-house;" which words were also written on the margin of the several leaves of the manuscript.

money

money 9,000l. whereupon the sum was borrowed, and Harris and Rutherford were securities for Colman and Powell.

" No sooner were they in possession of the theatre, &c. but Colman began to act in a most arbitrary and insolent manner; he scarce even deign'd to consult Harris and Rutherford in any one measure; he received and rejected dramatic pieces; engaging and refusing performers, &c. &c. without ever mentioning them; and at the first rehearsal, instead of introducing them to the performers, (which were fixed by him) he forbid them the stage, thereby endeavouring to prevent Harris and Rutherford from superintending his conduct.

" After much expostulation, Colman assented to a weekly meeting, when he, Colman, was to propose such plays, &c. and all such other measures, as he thought might be proper for the week following. This meeting was observed by all parties for a few weeks; yet Harris and Rutherford could not help seeing, that Colman did not, at the meetings, propose all the measures he intended to pursue; and that when he knew the sentiments of Harris and Rutherford, he generally acted in contradiction to them.

" Fearing to throw the whole affair into confusion, Harris and Rutherford bore this kind of treatment, and repeated insults, from Colman, without resenting them, as he still kept, in some degree, the rank of decency, and did not openly disclaim their negative power; but on Thursday, the day of October, he, in the highest terms, and most aggravating language, openly disclaimed their right of restraining him, and solemnly declared, that to them he would never disclose his future intentions; and that he would be responsible to the public, not to them, for the consequences. Though *they knew of no cause*, yet this appeared to them the language of passion or madness; therefore, he was again, the succeeding day, asked, if he would comply with his articles, and propose his measures, &c. Accordingly he again refused; and being expostulated with again and again, he on Saturday night declared, he would have no further communication with either of them; yet, notwithstanding all this, on Sunday November the 1st, he wrote them a letter, (vide copy marked A) wherein he recognizes the articles, recapitulates the substance of them, and promises to adhere to them for the future: but (strange as it must appear!) he so soon forgot his promise, that without having either *heard from*, or seen said Harris and Rutherford, he, on the very same night, and without their knowledge, or giving them the least notice thereof, summoned all the principal performers to a tavern, and there harangued them, and acquainted them, that he was invested with the absolute management of the theatre, and entirely suppressed Harris and Rutherford's right of controuling him. This conduct obliged Harris and Rutherford to read publicly on the stage, on Monday morning, the whole articles, when Colman, in appearance, took shame to himself, and declared, in the presence of Woodward, Smith, and Gibson, &c. that he would submit his measures to their controlment.

" During these transactions, it was impossible for Harris and Rutherford to be blind to the ridiculous partialities of Colman; yet they were of opinion, the causes of them were of such a nature, that as men, they could not take notice of them; but the instance was so glaring, in casting the play of Cymbeline, that, *in duty to the public*, Harris and Rutherford were obliged to take notice of it. What can be more distressing to men who have the least sense of honour or generosity, than being obliged to disclose the foibles and infirmities of others! yet a concise and true declaration of this sort, Harris and Rutherford find to be the only

way that can clear themselves and others, from the imputation Colman has no less artfully than wickedly put upon them. The uncommon effrontery Colman has exhibited in making a supposed partiality to a certain actress, his great plea of complaint, and even carrying his assurance to such a height, as to summons the friends of Harris and Rutherford, with others who were strangers to them, and then wickedly depending on alarming and frightening them with false accounts of their conduct respecting the above lady, the narrators hope will be deemed a sufficient occasion for their setting that affair in a clear light.—Colman had conceived a violent pique and resentment against the above-mentioned actress, the cause of which shall not be here related; but whilst others are conjecturing, Colman must burn with shame, as that lady's conduct had ever been most unexceptionable in the theatre. Harris and Rutherford could not help frequently expostulating on the injuries he delighted to inflict on her; in particular, although the whole theatre deemed her, as the company then stood, (*Mrs. Yates being not then engaged*) the properest person to have the part of Imogen in the play of Cymbeline: yet he, (Colman) at once to gratify his resentment to her, his lust of acting contrary to the opinion of Harris and Rutherford, and his spirit of gallantry, insisted most heartily, that that character should be given to a certain young actress; but with much ado he was shamed from his purpose, and he pledged his honour, that the first mentioned lady should have the character.—It may not be improper to remark here, that after Mrs. Yates was engaged, *it was universally acknowledged*, that no person in our company could stand in competition with her for that character.—Yet, after the concessions that were made by Colman, November the 2d, and the reconciliation that ensued, it was agreed by all parties, that as Colman had absurdly made that play a matter of dispute, it should be laid aside, and not got ready for exhibition, until approved by Harris and Rutherford; but notwithstanding that, he has since, viz. on the day of thought proper to perform it in opposition to their written disapprobation.

“On the day of Colman took upon him, without the knowledge or consent of Harris and Rutherford, to contract with Mr. and Mrs. Yates as players, viz. Mrs. Yates at 500 l. per annum, and Mr. Yates at 10 l. a week, with benefits.—Though the merit of these two performers would at first sight induce one to think, that this step, though irregular, was for the interest of the proprietors, yet, in fact, it has turned out *very much the reverse*; nay, it had been viewed in that light three or four days before by all the proprietors, who jointly declared their sentiments against such a step.—Colman engaging them in this clandestine manner may be accounted for from the following motives:—First, *being very avaricious*, and Powell and himself being in perfect collusion from first to last, he, by giving 500 l. to Mrs. Yates, made an addition to Powell's salary of 100 l. per annum: and again, by doing an act of so much consequence, without the knowledge of Harris and Rutherford, and even against their consent; he thereby meant to prove to the whole theatre, that he could and would act without consulting or regarding them; and, in consequence, expose Harris and Rutherford to derision. That this was a powerful motive, was plain from his immediate subsequent boastings—“That he had made this engagement on his own authority.”—The real loss sustained by this measure cannot be estimated at less than 1500 l. which may be thus made appear: The salaries of capital performers, that were before engaged, and now rendered useless, the addition of Powell's salary, the incredible
expence

expencc of dresses for Mrs. Yates ;—add to this, a loss which has been exceedingly heavy, though it cannot be ascertained, incurred by Colman's neglecting his duty in reviewing and getting up all other plays, except those in which the two above-mentioned performers, and William Powell, had capital characters ; endeavouring by such most unjustifiable means, to give colour and sanction to the step he had taken.

"The following is a proof of the glaring degree to which Colman and Powell carried their collusion. At a meeting, on or about the 20th of November last, between all the four parties, Colman proposed taking out of the treasury a sum from 64 to 70l. on account of the insertion of a few lines in the Rehearsal, and his proposed alterations of King Lear ; to all which Powell concurred immediately, and warmly ; but Harris and Rutherford remonstrated, that it would be more proper to take the money after the tragedy was produced. Yet, notwithstanding, Colman did take out of the treasury that sum, between 64 and 70l. since which Harris and Rutherford have neither seen nor heard of the play. At the very same meeting, Powell, notwithstanding his articles to the contrary, earnestly insisted on the equity of his having the benefit arising from some one night, on account of his not going to Bristol theatre in the ensuing summer ; to which proposal Colman immediately and warmly concurred. At length, to avoid dispute, Harris and Rutherford consented that Powell should go to Bristol theatre, but Colman refused ; notwithstanding he urged the propriety of giving him a benefit, and flew into a great heat and passion because Harris and Rutherford would not consent to it.

"What aggravates, to Harris and Rutherford, the very extraordinary expences for dresses, &c. is, that Colman has taken upon him, with some sinister view or other, to deposit a great part of the wardrobe, amounting to a very large sum, in the house of Mr. Powell, instead of the place appointed for that purpose in the theatre ; and Powell, in the most insulting terms, refuses to bring them to the proper place, though applied to by letter.

"Through Mr. Colman's ill conduct, in the management of the theatre, in measures pursued without the knowledge, or against the consent, of Harris and Rutherford, *they verily believe* a loss not less than 3,500l. has been sustained ; which sum will not appear extraordinary, to those who know the very large receipts and disbursements of a theatre, and which altogether depend on the management thereof.

"It is not so much the abovementioned *losses* that alarm Harris and Rutherford, as that they plainly perceive the ultimate views of Colman and Powell to be their total exclusion, which they purpose to bring about, by setting them, Harris and Rutherford, at so great a distance, and keeping them so ignorant of their own affairs, that they may not be able to see through the future operations of Colman and Powell ; and which will unquestionably be directed for the purpose of their private emolument.

"From the foregoing case, how very unjustifiable the behaviour of Colman and Powell is, in persisting (in despite of honour and honesty, and the known original intentions of Harris and Rutherford, and their present subsisting articles) to *mismanage* their property, every reader is left to determine."

On Monday, January 25, the Prompter of the Theatre, a very honest and intelligent man, who thought himself a party aggrieved by that
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part of the paper which related to a *certain young actress*, waited on Mess. Harris and Rutherford, who both disclaimed any knowledge of such a paper having been exposed till within two hours before that instant; adding, however, *that they could easily conjecture the quarter from which it proceeded, and seeming to ascribe the publication of it to the intemperate zeal of some particular friend.* Upon their expressing a desire to see the paper, the Prompter produced a copy of it; which Mr. Rutherford turned over with much apparent eagerness and curiosity, and joined with Mr. Harris in a request that it might be left in their hands. It was so, and the Prompter departed; but not without previously declaring, that, since the Paper did not appear to have their sanction, he hoped they would not be offended, if he took every occasion of testifying his contempt and detestation of that part of it, which was relative to a *certain young actress*.

Within less than an hour after this interview were received, by the several persons to whom they were addressed, the two following Letters:

To GEORGE COLMAN, Esq. and W. POWELL, Esq.

" GENTLEMEN,

Monday 25th Jan. 1768. One o'Clock.

" THIS instant we are inform'd of a paper having lain for publick inspection at Slaughter's Coffee-house ever since Saturday morning. We think it proper to inform you, that we were greatly surprized at the above information, being intirely ignorant that such a paper was left there, until now acquainted therewith. Are,

Gentlemen,

Your humble Servants,

T. HARRIS.

J. RUTHERFORD."

To the Master of SLAUGHTER'S Coffee-House.

" S I R,

" I AM astonished to hear you have exposed a paper (indorsed " A narrative of transactions relative to Covent Garden theatre") that was by accident left on Saturday morning on one of your tables.

" You are required immediately to seal it up, and send it by the bearer.

Your humble servant,

Surry Street, Monday morning, Jan. 25th.

T. HARRIS."

On the same day, and the next morning, the following notes passed between Mrs. Yates and Mr. Harris:

" MRS. Yates presents her compliments to Mess. Harris and Rutherford. She has seen a copy of a paper in their names left on the table of a Coffee-house, wherein they are pleas'd to complain of heavy losses sustained in consequence of her engagement at Covent-Garden. She begs to know whether it has their sanction; because, if it has, Mrs. Yates, injustice to herself, will give it a publick answer: if,

if, on the other hand, some busy meddling scribbler has made free with their names, she will treat it with the most silent contempt."

Monday, Jan. 25th, King-street, Covent-Garden.

"MR. Harris presents his compliments to Mrs. Yates: flatters himself no one but the enemies of Mr. Rutherford and Mr. Harris, or those to whom they are entirely unknown, can pretend to suppose them capable of so very mean an action as to submit a case in which they were any ways concerned, to the opinion of a Coffee-room."

Surry-street, Tuesday morning, 26th January.

The same evening Mr. Harris told the Prompter, that it was hoped he would not be too violent or acrimonious in his language concerning the written paper left at Slaughter's; for although Mr. Rutherford and himself utterly disclaimed the circulation of it, yet as malevolent persons would undoubtedly attribute it to them, such language from him would be considered as an indirect affront to themselves.

The next morning, January 26, the following Advertisement appeared in the Publick Advertiser and the Gazetteer:

"A WRITTEN paper, wherein our names were inserted, having been exhibited at Slaughter's Coffee-house, we think it necessary to declare, that it was done without our consent or knowledge.

T. HARRIS.
J. RUTHERFORD."

N. B. This was also in Publick Advertiser of 26th January.

On perusing the above Advertisement we sent them the following Letter:

To J. RUTHERFORD, Esq. and T. HARRIS, Esq.

"GENTLEMEN,

Jan. 26th, 1768.

"WE are very glad to find that you have thought proper publicly to declare the written paper, so injurious to our characters, was exhibited at Slaughter's coffee-house without your knowledge or consent; but we could wish, that you had, at the same time, disavowed being the authors of it; for if you do not disclaim that also, it is a matter of great indifference to us, whether it was circulated by yourselves or your friends. We think it incumbent on you to add such a declaration to your advertisement, as otherwise, we must still consider the paper as coming directly or indirectly from yourselves.

We are, &c.

G. COLMAN.
W. POWELL."

To

To this Letter we received the next day the following answer :

To G. C. and W. P. Esqs.

" GENTLEMEN,

" YOU are in an error if you imagine the advertisement we published was intended for any other purpose, than to contradict the insinuations which we heard had been thrown out, that we were the circulators of the paper exhibited at Slaughter's coffee-house, which we neither were directly or indirectly.

" Whenever we think proper to acknowledge ourselves the authors [of any production, it will be from the suggestions of our own minds, and not at the requisition of any man whatsoever. We are, Gentlemen, yours, &c.

Surry-street, Wed. morn.
Jan. 27th, 1768.

T. HARRIS,
J. RUTHERFORD."

In the Gazetteer and Publick Advertiser of the same day appeared this Advertisement :

Speedily will be published,

" A TRUE state of the differences subsisting between the proprietors of C. G. Theatre, in answer to a false, scandalous, and malicious libel, highly injurious to the characters of Mess. Powell and Colman, exhibited on Saturday, Jan. 23d, and the two following days, at Slaughter's Coffee-house, in St. Martin's-lane.

By GEORGE COLMAN."

In the same papers of the next morning appeared the following :

" GREAT enquiries having been made after the Author of a paper left by accident at Slaughter's Coffee-house on Saturday last, any person who has publickly expressed himself to have been injured by the exhibition of that paper, may receive information concerning the Author, by applying to either of us.

T. HARRIS, Surry-street.
J. RUTHERFORD, Newman-street."

In consequence of the above Advertisement Mr. Bury, an attorney of King's-Bench-Walks, Temple, waited on Mr. Harris from us, for the information promised in the advertisement concerning the author ; against whom (he told Mr. Harris) he had orders to commence a prosecution. To this Mr. Harris replied, that Mr. Bury did not come within the description of the advertisement, and that neither himself nor Mr. Rutherford could give an answer to any person's attorney.

The same day, an hour or two after, Mr. Bury waited on Mr. Harris a second time, and delivered the following Letter :

To J. RUTHERFORD, and T. HARRIS, Esqs.

" GENTLEMEN,

" WE have publickly expressed ourselves to have been injured by the libellous paper left at Slaughter's coffee-house; we now apply to you for the information you have to-day promised by publick advertisement concerning the author.

G. COLMAN.
W. POWELL."

At this interview another gentleman, whom Mr. Bury supposed to be Mr. Rutherford, was present. This application, however, proved as fruitless as the former. Mr. Harris said that they could send no written answer, nor any verbal message : and upon being asked what was the intention of their advertisement, again replied, that they could send no written answer, nor any verbal message. Mr. Bury then observed, that Mr. Powell and Mr. Colman *had publicly declared themselves to have been injured by the paper* ; and asked if those gentlemen, on a personal application to them, (Mess. Harris and Rutherford) might receive the information promised in the advertisement. Mr. Harris replied, that they could send no other answer than what he had just before given.

Upon enquiry after the manner in which the Paper came to be exhibited at Slaughter's Coffee-house, the fact stands thus.

On Saturday, January 23, about noon, as Mr. Julliot, of Henrietta-street, apothecary, was sitting in a box at Slaughter's Coffee-house, reading the news-papers, two young gentlemen entered the room, and desired to pass him. They passed him, and sat down in the same box. After some time they pulled out a book and a written paper, and called for pen and ink. The bar-maid asked, if they did not want any *paper* ? They replied in the negative, and used the pen and ink in making insertions or erasements, or both, in the manuscript which they had just before produced. In about a quarter of an hour they departed ; and Mr. Julliot, after having sufficiently amused himself with the news-papers, happened to cast his eye on the manuscript, which lay on the table. At first he thought it might have been by *accident left* there ; but seeing it indorsed, " A Narrative of Transactions relative to Covent-Garden-Theatre," took it for granted, from the title, that it was left there for general inspection, and accordingly made no scruple to examine the contents of it ; on perusal of which he told the servant in the bar, that it related to the disputes among the Covent-Garden Managers ; and that he supposed that the two Gentlemen who had just left the room, were no other than Mess. Rutherford and Harris.

Mr. Julliot does not recollect that the Paper was also indorsed, " For the use of the Gentlemen of Slaughter's Coffee-house," at the time that he saw it. Mr. Preston, the master of the Coffee-house, is confident that neither he, nor any of his people, to the best of his knowledge or belief, added those words ; and a gentleman (whose name will be mentioned if the fact is disputed) who perused the paper about two o'clock the same day, well remembers that it was then so indorsed.

It has been contended that this Paper was nothing more than the heads of a Law-Case, left by accident on a Coffee-house table. The substance of it may have been, and I believe has been, laid before Counsel ;

but the very form of it, as it now stands, pronounces it to have been drawn up with another view. Be that as it may, it lay for three days together in the Coffee-room, as common and publick as the Daily Advertiser; so that the characters of the parties vilified were equally injured, whether it was left there by accident or design. We have stiled this paper "a false, scandalous, and malicious libel." We repeat those expressions, confident that every dispassionate reader of the following narrative will assent to the justice and propriety of the terms in which we have spoken of the Paper. The charges of collusion and fraud affect us too deeply to be mentioned without some emotion. As to the virulence and malignity of the stile, and the words "effrontery," "assurance," "void of honour and honesty," &c. &c. we take them from whence they come, and consider them as mere paper and packthread to make up the parcel of scandal. The expressions of contempt thrown on us on account of supposed talents, which we should be proud to possess, give us no pain; and we look on the terms *William Powell the Player*, and *George Colman a Dramatick Author*, as mere words of course, like John Rutherford, and Thomas Harris, *Esquires*.

Conscious of the integrity of my actions, and that the more my conduct was known to the world, the more fully it would be justified, I have in some peevish moments, when provoked to the uttermost, threatened to appeal to the Publick; but on cooler reflection was always averse to such a proceeding; and it is not without the greatest regret that I am now driven to publish letters, and lay open conversation. The reader indeed will immediately perceive that they are not such as pass between friend and friend; or, if they were, that I have not been the aggressor in this instance. My letters have been submitted by my profest adversaries to Counsel, and the most casual expressions dropt carelessly in the flow of *table-talk* have been urged against me as solemn resolutions. These very letters and conversations are also the basis of the black charges brought against me; so that I do but meet the Libeller on his own ground; on which, if he uses the arms of Falshood for the attack, I have certainly a right to have recourse to Truth for my shield.

A

TRUE STATE, &c.

ABOUT the latter end of last March, Mr. Powell desired to speak with me on particular business, and acquainted me that a couple of gentlemen had applied to him to become a joint purchaser with them of the patents, &c. of Covent-Garden Theatre; that he could never think of embarking in such an undertaking with two inexperienced young men, who perhaps might know but little of the world, and certainly could know nothing of the internal management of a Theatre; that he had not sufficient confidence in his own abilities to suppose himself equal to the task; but that, if he had my assistance, he did not doubt of success; concluding with a request of my permission to mention me to the two gentlemen, and at the same time declaring, that, unless I were included in the treaty, he should decline the proposal, fearing it might terminate in his ruin.

Mr. Powell, with my consent, mentioned my name to the gentlemen. They objected to taking in a fourth; but Mr. Powell declared his opinion, that they would reap more profit from a fourth share with Mr. Colman's assistance, than from a third without him.

A few days after, on another interview between Mr. Powell and the gentlemen, they told him that they had considered of his last proposal; in consequence whereof they had made proper enquiries concerning Mr. Colman, and found his accession to the partnership so desirable a circumstance, that they returned Mr. Powell many thanks for making so happy an improvement of their plan, and desired to have a meeting on the occasion with Mr. Colman as soon as possible.

March 30.
1767.

Accordingly, on the thirtieth of March, all the four parties met at Mr. Powell's. Mr. Colman being asked by Mess. Rutherford and Harris, whether he had considered of the affair which Mr. Powell had at their desire communicated to him, replied, that he thought himself much obliged to Mr. Powell for his good opinion, but could not think of availing himself of such a partiality, unless they concurred in Mr. Powell's sentiments; and that if they were not of opinion that Mr. Colman's advice and assistance were essential to the welfare of the undertaking, he would by no means think of becoming a party concerned merely from the nomination of Mr. Powell. Their reply to this declaration was conceived in the most handsome terms; and, to convince Mr. Colman that the many civil things they said on this occasion were not words of course, they afterwards recurred to this subject, and repeatedly assured him of the great value they set upon his accession to their scheme, independent of every other consideration than their thorough persuasion of the advantage that would result from it in the success of the Theatre. Being late, it was agreed, after a short conversation on the intended purchase, that *the four* should have a second meeting the very next night, in order to come to a final determination, and to enter into articles of agreement among themselves concerning the purchase. Just before their parting, Mr. Colman, addressing Mess. Harris and Rutherford, observed, that managing a Theatre was like stirring a fire, which every man thought he could do better than any body else. "Now, gentlemen, said he, I think I stir a fire better than any man in England." To this they replied, "Do you manage; let Mr. Powell act; all we want is to have good interest for our money."

March 31.

The next evening we met again; and, at the desire of Mess. Rutherford and Harris, Mr. Hutchinson, a gentleman whom they particularly recommended for his abilities and integrity in his profession, attended with an instrument prepared for us to sign. By this agreement, Mess. Rutherford and Harris were empowered to treat for the purchase of the Theatre, &c. at any sum not exceeding 60,000l. forty thousand to be raised by themselves, and twenty by Colman and Powell, whom they were to assist with a loan of 5000l. each, to make up their proportions of the purchase-money. On Mr. Hutchinson's reading over this instrument, when he came to that part of it wherein it was recited; that the four parties *should be jointly and equally concerned in the management of the Theatre*, Mr. Colman begged leave to interrupt him, and told him it was a settled point that he (Mr. Colman) was to be invested with the direction of the Theatre; whereupon, to his very great surprise, Mess. Harris and Rutherford declared, that they never had the least intention of forming such an article; that, as they had the

the turn of the scale in the purchase-money, they could not think of lowering their consequence in the purchase, &c. Mr. Colman said, that he took it for granted (as he most certainly did) that this matter had been previously understood on all sides; and that he had plainly declared to Mr. Powell, on his first application, that he would never be concerned in the purchase, unless he should be invested with the theatrical direction. Mr. Powell allowed the truth of this assertion, but *said nothing in approbation of Mr. Colman's claim of the management*; and Mess. Rutherford and Harris, seeming sensible of his superior utility in this province, but unwilling to acknowledge that superiority under their hands, the agreement was at last signed by each of the four parties, in the form in which it had been originally prepared.

This transaction passed on the thirty-first of March, though the manuscript paper exhibited at Slaughter's, as well as the printed Narrative, for the same purposes of fallacy that will appear through the whole, place it much later.

The next morning I set out for Bath, where I remained till the third or fourth of May. In the mean time, Mess. Harris and Rutherford contracted for the purchase, deposited 10,000*l.* and agreed for the payment of the remainder on the ensuing first of July.

I have been extremely particular in the above relation, because I am resolved not to suppress or disguise the most minute fact, that may seem in the least favourable to Mess. Rutherford and Harris. For a like reason I shall suppress all my reflections and resolutions declared to particular friends, till I had the pleasure of seeing those gentlemen again, which was not till some days after my return to town; the same melancholy occasion that summoned me from Bath sooner than I proposed, having also secluded me from company. In the mean time, Mess. Rutherford and Harris expressed the greatest impatience for an interview with me, *apart from Mr. Powell*. On the very first conference, they testified, in the warmest terms, their earnest desire that I should be invested with the theatrical direction, complaining at the same time of the indiscretion of Mr. Powell, to whom they ascribed the notoriety of our intended purchase, which was now become the common talk of the town, and our names inserted in every news-paper.

It is but justice to Mr. Powell to declare, that it afterwards appeared that, from the peculiar circumstances of Mr. Rich's will, his widow thought herself bound in honour to declare to some other candidates for the purchase, that she had given notice to the trustees of her having contracted for the sale. This circumstance, as well as the necessary applications by each of the parties to their friends for the requisite sum, tended to make the treaty publick. One part of Mr. Powell's conduct on this occasion,

occasion, though it certainly contributed to betray our operations, is very much to his honour, though the written Narrative, with the same spirit of candour that animates the whole, endeavours to interpret it to his disadvantage, and to tax him with a scandalous breach of faith to the Patentees of Drury-Lane Theatre. The truth is, that the very day after Mess. Rutherford and Harris had applied to Mr. Powell, he communicated the matter to Mr. Lacey, who very kindly assured him of his best wishes, and a continuance of the same friendship which he had shewn to Mr. Powell on every former occasion. Mr. Garrick was then at Bath.

May, 1767. In a word, Mess. Harris and Rutherford now insisted on the expediency of investing Mr. Colman with the direction of the Theatre, and were extremely solicitous to settle this point before Mr. Powell's summer-engagements should call him out of town. To this end it was proposed, that we should each of us consider of that and some other necessary articles, and throw our thoughts concerning them upon paper. I did so; and Mr. Harris, in a few days, took occasion to call upon me one morning *alone*. I then submitted to him a paper containing a sketch of some articles, and, among the rest, one relative to the management, which was as follows :

“ That George Colman shall be invested with the theatrical direction, that is to say, the power of engaging and dismissing actors, actresses, singers, dancers, musicians, &c. &c. of receiving or rejecting such new pieces as shall be offered to the Theatre; of casting the plays; of appointing what plays, farces, &c. shall be performed; together with the sole conduct of all such things as are generally understood to be comprehended under the dramatick and theatrical province : *Provided always that the said George Colman shall not do any act contrary to the opinion of ANY TWO of the other partners in writing expressed: and that if the four partners shall be equally divided in opinion, that the matter in dispute shall be referred to two arbitrators, one for each party; and if the said two arbitrators cannot agree, that they shall join in appointing one other arbitrator, whose opinion shall be decisive and final.*”

On perusing the above rough draught of an article, Mr. Harris did me the honour to observe, that the footing on which I was willing to rest my management was extremely generous, and agreeable to the candour which I had shewn in my whole transaction with them; but that he thought it necessary that I should have *more power* than such an article would give me; that he had the greatest esteem and regard for his friend Mr. Rutherford, whom he thought a very honest, good-natured man, but that there were no two persons in the world more likely to differ in
opinion

opinion than himself and Mr. Rutherford ; so that if Mr. Rutherford and Mr. Powell should happen to join in opposition to any of my measures, an obstruction in the management must necessarily ensue ; that his brother-in-law, Mr. Longman, had told him, that he and Mr. Rutherford *might* differ, but that he and Mr. Colman *never could* ; he could wish, therefore, that I would agree to put Mr. Powell entirely out of the question, and to place the whole *negative power* in himself and Mr. Rutherford, and then (added he) “ *You will always be sure of ONE of us.*”

Although this scene past entirely between Mr. Harris and me, yet the truth of it does not rest on my bare assertion ; for I recapitulated all these circumstances to Mr. Harris some weeks ago at the Theatre, in the presence of Messrs. Rutherford, Powell, and Hutchinson. He allowed the facts, but added, that he had been mistaken in me. I returned him the compliment.

I fell into the snare, and said, that if Mr. Powell could be prevailed on to assent to such an article, I had no objection to it. Mr. Rutherford, in this instance, as in every other, implicitly submitted to the opinion of Mr. Harris. Mr. Powell, however, shewed *great repugnance* to giving me the direction. On my expostulating with him alone on this subject, and reminding him of his first application to me, and my declared resolutions at that period, he frankly confessed that *he had been advised to the contrary* ; but that, on reflection, he returned to his original intentions, and was content to put his fame and fortune into my hands.

This is the *real* history of the article respecting the management, which was accordingly signed by all parties on the 14th of May, and is as follows :

May 14-

“ WHEREAS Thomas Harris, John Rutherford, George Colman, and William Powell, by certain articles of agreement, dated the 31st Day of March last, did agree to purchase of the Representatives of John Rich, esq. deceased, two patents for exhibiting theatrical performances, and the several leases of Covent-garden theatre, and the rooms, buildings, conveniences, furniture, cloaths, scenes, decorations, music, entertainments, and all things belonging to the said Theatre ; and the said Thomas Harris and John Rutherford were thereby authorised to treat for, and purchase the same, at a sum not exceeding 60,000 l. and the purchase-money was to be advanced by the said parties equally, and they were to become jointly possessed of, and interested in, the premises so to be purchased, and were to be jointly and equally concerned in the management of the said Theatre, and were to execute proper deeds and instruments for that purpose, when the said purchase should be completed. And whereas the said Thomas Harris and John Rutherford have accordingly contracted and agreed with the representatives of the said John Rich, for the purchasing of the said patents, leases, premises, and things, at and for the sum of 60,000 l. and such purchase is to be completed on the first of July next : Now the said several parties, having perused and fully understanding the purport and contents of the said contract, do approve of, and confirm the same. And having

ing also, in consequence thereof, taken into their consideration the Management of the said Theatre, they have, for the better and more easy conducting of the business thereof, as well as for their joint and equal benefit and advantage, agreed, and do hereby mutually declare and agree, that, notwithstanding any thing contained in the said agreement already made between the said parties, the said George Colman shall be invested with the Direction of the said Theatre in the particulars following, viz. that he shall have the power of engaging and dismissing performers of all kinds; of receiving or rejecting such new pieces as shall be offered to the said theatre, or the proprietors thereof; of casting the plays; of appointing what plays, farces, entertainments, and other exhibitions, shall be performed; and of conducting all such things as are generally understood to be comprehended in the dramatic and theatrical province. And that the said Thomas Harris and John Rutherford shall be desired to attend to the comptrolment of the Accounts and Treasury, relative to the said theatre. *Provided always, and in as much as the said Thomas Harris and John Rutherford will have leisure to attend to the affairs of the said theatre, and the said William Powell is to be engaged as an Actor or Performer upon the Stage (for which purpose separate articles are intended to be entered into between him and the other Parties), in which his time and attention will be chiefly employed and taken up, so that he will not be able to apply himself in managing the business of the theatre; it is therefore hereby further agreed, that the said George Colman shall, from time to time, and at all times hereafter, communicate and submit his conduct, and the measures he shall intend to pursue, unto them the said Thomas Harris and John Rutherford; and in case they shall, at any time, signify their disapprobation thereof, in writing, unto the said George Colman, then and in that case the measures, so disapproved of, shall not be carried into execution, any thing before contained to the contrary thereof notwithstanding. Yet, nevertheless, with respect to the said William Powell, it is intended and agreed, that he shall, at all times, give his advice and assistance relative to any part of the business of the said theatre, when thereunto desired by the other parties.* Witness the hands of the said parties, this 14th day of May, 1767.

Witness,
JA. HUTCHINSON.

T. HARRIS,
JNO. RUTHERFORD,
G. COLMAN,
WILL. POWELL."

It was at the time of the above conference that Mr. Harris first mentioned Mrs. Lessingham, expressing his desire that she might be engaged at our Theatre; but at the same time requesting that *I would not be alarmed* on this occasion, as he did not wish to have her considered with more partiality than any other Performer, either in regard to the allotment of Parts, or proportion of Salary. I very readily acquiesced in receiving her, provided she could, with any propriety, disentangle herself from her engagements at Drury Lane; and even declared a propensity to shew her any reasonable partiality, which I did not doubt was all that would be required.

May 28. On the 28th of May was signed another Article, chiefly relative to Mr. Powell's engagement as a Performer, of which more shall be said in the sequel. By the same Article it was also agreed, that none of the parties should be concerned in any other Theatre; and that

that any of them producing any new Play, Farce, Entertainment, or other exhibition, or any alteration of an old Play, Farce, &c. should have the common emoluments accruing to Authors from such productions, exclusive of the other parties.

On the first of July the contract with Mr. Rich's executors was completed, and the money then paid; but in order to effect the purchase, the sum of Fifteen Thousand Pounds had been borrowed, viz. *Six* Thousand for Mr. Rutherford, *Five* for Mr. Colman, and *Four* for Mr. Powell; for securing which sum of Fifteen Thousand Pounds the three fourth shares of Messrs. Rutherford, Harris, and Colman, were mortgaged, Mr. Powell having made over the first claim on the whole of his share to the person of whom he had borrowed the other Eleven Thousand of his proportion of the purchase. By this account it will appear, that Messrs. Harris and Rutherford were not called upon to make good their original contract; that Mr. Powell raised One Thousand Pounds more than his contract required; that Mr. Colman was not obliged to them, directly or indirectly, for a single shilling; that he was a joint security with them for the Four Thousand advanced to Mr. Powell, and that Mr. Colman raised, independent of the patent security, One Thousand Pounds more than Mr. Rutherford, who brought but *Nine* Thousand into the common stock to Mr. Colman's *Ten*. It will scarcely be contended that Mr. Colman could not raise 5000*l.* on his share; at least it cannot be urged with a good grace by Messrs. Harris and Rutherford, who often assured him how much more easily the money was raised by the use of his name: not that these particulars would be worth mentioning, if it were not to shew that there is not the most minute circumstance in this whole transaction, wherein the writer of the libellous Narrative has not attempted to deceive.

The purchase being completed, Mr. Powell, who came up to town on purpose to sign the writings, returned to Bristol; and Messrs. Rutherford and Harris set out on a tour of pleasure to Buxton, Matlock, Harrowgate, &c. leaving all the care of preparing the House and Company for the ensuing season to Mr. Colman. Before their departure Mr. Colman shewed Mr. Harris a paper containing a sketch of the alterations then proposed in the Company, and lamented the want of his and Mr. Rutherford's and Mr. Powell's assistance and advice in the course of his future operations during the summer; on which occasion Mr. Harris, with much politeness and apparent sincerity, replied, that it was of no consequence, since they should have nothing to do but to approve what he proposed.

The many cares attending my new situation are not easily imagined; but I was embarked on a sea of troubles, and was

resolved to make way, if possible, with chearfulness and resolution. After a most laborious and unwearied attention to the business of the Theatre for six or seven weeks, having settled every thing in the best manner I was able, I went down to Bristol, and communicated all my proceedings to Mr. Powell, who expressed great satisfaction at the measures I had taken. In about three weeks I returned to London, expecting to meet the two other gentlemen returned from the North, and to find them in the same good humour which they maintained before they set out.

Sept. In this, however, I was cruelly deceived. They received me in the coldest manner, and instead of seeming sensible of the trouble I had taken, broke out into complaints of their not having been made duly acquainted with all my proceedings. The only material steps I had taken, were the receiving a Comedy of Dr. Goldsmith, and making an engagement with Mr. Macklin; neither of which, especially the latter, I should have done merely on my own judgment, had it not been almost next to impossible to have obtained their opinion; as their motions were quite uncertain, and I never received a letter from either of them, till a few days before I went to Bristol. Of these measures, however, they declared their entire approbation; but before we parted, Mr. Rutherford took a fresh occasion to differ with me, and rendered a very trivial concern a matter of great importance, *by peremptorily insisting* that the arrangements which I had made in that instance should not be pursued. What rendered this unexpected opposition the more shocking to me, was, that it was introduced by observations rather unfavourable to the rest of my conduct, for which I was weak enough to expect a very different return. Mr. Rutherford continued to *insist* on my waving the point, which at that time was not only unadvisable, but impracticable. I professed, therefore, that I should most steadily adhere to it; and on those terms we parted.

It is but justice to Mr. Harris to declare, that he acted with the utmost candour on this occasion. He undertook to be a mediator, and used every method to conciliate the mind of each party. At length Mr. Rutherford was prevailed on to wave his opposition, by the interposition of his friend, and the following letter from me.

“ DEAR SIR,

“ WARM as I am, I can see and feel the impropriety of it in myself, as well as in others; and I do assure you, that I have entirely forgot any little asperities on your part, and am most heartily sorry for whatever might have the air of violence on mine. Any arguments in favour of the contested point, arising from considerations of generosity, prudence, or necessity, I leave to your cool reflection; and I now request it as a favour, that all which hath passed on this subject, may be buried in silence and oblivion; and that you will give a chearful assent to the measure, if it be
for,

for no other reason than merely to oblige your friend, who will lay hold of every occasion to convince you, that he is, with the utmost regard and esteem, dear Sir,

Your most affectionate humble servant,

Sept. 8, 1767.

G. COLMAN.

To J. RUTHERFORD, Esq.

The charges of my forbidding them the stage on the first rehearsal, and neglecting to introduce them to the performers, if they did not betray a strange disposition to jealousy and ill humour, would scarce deserve notice. All I can say is, that I never intended to give them the least offence, or to be deficient in any due attention to them; nor did they themselves at that time seem to entertain such suspicions: for it was on the stage that Mr. Rutherford and I first met after the above little difference: it was on the stage that he took me by the hand, assuring me that he was perfectly satisfied, and how ardently he desired the continuation of a good understanding between us: to which I was so sincerely inclined, that I concealed the whole transaction from Mr. Powell; and the curtain drew up on the 14th of September, with seeming content on all sides, and the most entire harmony in the cabinet of the four kings of Brentford.

The above difference, however, proved to be a prologue to the scenes of disputes that were to succeed. A day or two after Sept. our opening the Theatre, I found the two gentlemen there together, and Mr. Harris, to my great surprize, in very ill humour. On enquiring the cause, he said that an insult had been offered to Mrs. Lessingham; concerning which he would make no farther enquiry, as he *would not know* from whom it proceeded. That lady having been engaged on the recommendation of Mr. Harris, I verily believe that Mr. Powell, as well as myself, was inclined to treat her not only with respect, but even with partiality, as far as it could be consistent with the general interest. I ventured therefore to vouch thus much, and desired to know the present matter of complaint, which proved to be her having been assigned a dressing-room up stairs. I told him that this was the first word I had ever heard of it: that my attendance on matters merely dramattick and theatrical, was more than sufficient business for me; and that the care of dressing-rooms, ward-robe, &c. had been kindly undertaken by Mr. and Mrs. Powell. Upon this he took me apart, and repeated his expressions of dissatisfaction with more warmth than before. My second answer was no other than the first; whereupon Mr. Harris in some measure turned the conversation, by desiring that Mrs. Lessingham might have the part of Imogen. I told him that, as the Cast Book then stood, it was allotted to Miss Ward. He said that Mrs. Lessingham could play it as well. I did not deny but she might; adding, that all the business

then assigned to Miss Ward must be understood to be merely on supposition; for that as I had never seen her play, she might perhaps upon trial appear unfit for it; and that I had given her the part of Imogen, merely on account of the youth and innocence of her figure, which I thought very suitable to the character. I added at the same time, that, as a friend to Mrs. Lessingham, I would advise her never to play a line of Tragedy. This Mr. Harris in some measure allowed, but did not seem to think Imogen so much out of her sphere as Belvidera, and some other tragick characters. I mentioned also, that as Mr. Powell had a capital part in the play, it would be but a reasonable attention to him, to consult how far it would be agreeable to him to cast the play in that manner: but Mr. Harris saw no occasion for Mr. Powell's concurrence. This was all that passed on the subject; and this was the only time that ever the name

of Miss Ward was mentioned for the part of Imogen; nor was it then agitated on either side as a matter of contention between her and Mrs. Lessingham. From this circumstance the Publick may determine of the confidence that is due to the libellous author of the written Narrative; wherein, for obvious reasons, mean as they are base, that young actress is brought forward as the object of dispute. It is to be hoped, however, that these wicked insinuations, false as they are scandalous, will not contribute to throw a stain on the character of a young actress, *whose conduct has not only ever been most unexceptionable in THE THEATRE, but every-where else.*

About the same period that the arrangement of Mrs. Lessingham's dressing-room was taken into consideration by Mr. Harris, his friend Mr. Rutherford took upon him to promise a separate dressing-room for Mrs. Bellamy. Mr. and Mrs. Powell remonstrated concerning the great want of room behind the scenes to no purpose. Mr. Rutherford said he had promised; and if it cost him 500*l.* to build new rooms, it must be done. In a word, both the ladies were obliged, and both the gentlemen were satisfied.

On Friday, Sept. 18, the Prompter surprized me, by acquainting me that Mrs. Lessingham had returned the part of Nerissa in the Merchant of Venice; and my surprize was redoubled a few hours after, by his putting into my hands the following letter:

"SIR,

"As I returned you the part of Nerissa, I think it right to give my reason for it. I have as yet had no list of those parts it is intended I should play; when I have, and find I have an equal share of good and bad, I shall have no objection to any, though the lowest. I desire you will acquaint the managers with this. I am, Sir,

Your humble servant,

J. LESSINGHAM."

To Mr. YOUNGER, Prompter, Covent-garden.

"Received the letter, of which this is a copy, Friday, September 18, 1767; but the letter itself has no date.

J. Y."

Piqued at the studied insolence of this epistle, but unwilling to resent it on account of the quarter from which it proceeded, I submitted the letter that very evening to Mr. Harris, who defended the propriety of it in such terms as led me to speak my thoughts very freely, both of the letter and its author. This was very highly resented by Mr. Harris, by whose privity I then took it for granted the letter had been sent; and I have since seen no reason to alter my opinion. He went directly to the Prompter, and ordered him to bring the Cast Book to his house the next day. The Prompter did so, and delivered it to Mess. Harris and Rutherford, from whom, on the morning of Sunday the 20th of Sept. just a week after opening the theatre, I received the following letter:

" SIR,

Saturday, 19 Sept. 1767.

" Upon examining the Cast Book, we find several parts allotted to Mrs. Lessingham, which we think improper for her to perform; and others omitted, which we think very proper for her sphere of acting. In order to avoid mistakes, we have either expunged or erased from the Cast Book, the names opposite to such improper parts, and desire you will give directions to the prompter to insert her name in lieu. There are, likewise, many parts of plays not cast, which we think that lady very capable of performing, to the advantage of the theatre and herself, which we have subjoined to the list inclosed.

" In this, and in every circumstance which we shall advert to, we shall endeavour to do justice to merit, at the same time that we shall carefully attend to propriety with respect to ourselves. Are, Sir,

Your most humble servants,

T. HARRIS,
J. RUTHERFORD."

GEORGE COLMAN, *Esq.*

" WE have deferred examining the generality of parts cast, lest we might interfere with the business of the theatre by detaining the book so long at one time; a future occasion may present us with an opportunity of conveying to you our further animadversions on that head. We are as before,

19th Sept.

T. H.
J. R.

GEORGE COLMAN, *Esq.*

These are in the Cast Book.	Betty	—	—	Clandestine Marriage.
	Clarissa	—	—	Confederacy.
	Imogen	—	—	Cymbeline.
	Belmour	—	—	Way to Keep Him.
	Lavinia	—	—	Fair Penitent.
	Flora	—	—	SheWou'd and SheWou'd Not.
	Lady Betty Modish	—	—	Careless Husband.
	Sullen	—	—	Stratagem.
	Flora	—	—	Country Lass.
	Nerissa	—	—	Merchant of Venice.

Lady

These not ; but to be inserted.	Lady Fanciful	—	—	Provok'd Wife.
	unless Mrs. Bellamy chuses it.			
	Bizarre	—	—	Inconstant.
	Lady Anne	—	—	Richard.
	Lady Dainty	—	—	Double Gallant.
	Leonora	—	—	Revenge.
	Amanda	—	—	Love's Last Shift.
	Mrs. Conquest	—	—	Lady's Last Stake.
	Fidelia	—	—	Plain Dealer.
	Clarinda	—	—	Suspicious Husband.
	Lady Harriet	—	—	Funeral.
	Berinthia	—	—	Relapse.
Cast.	Florival	—	—	Deuce is in Him.

" These parts allotted to Mrs. Lessingham.

19 Sept. 1767.

T. H.
J. R."

Here was an open act of hostility ; an act so far from endeavouring to extenuate the insolence of Mrs. Lessingham, that it was plainly calculated to convince me that they were both determined on every occasion to countenance and support it. My answer, sent the same morning, was as follows :

" GENTLEMEN,

" WITHOUT dwelling on the very gross treatment which I have received from yourselves and Mrs. Lessingham, I shall beg leave to remind you, that while you have been conspiring to check my authority, you have exceeded the limits of your own. The article of agreement betwixt us, which invested me with the theatrical management, empowered you jointly to object to my measures, but not to prescribe new ones of your own ; and from the director of the theatre, to sink me into something lower than the prompter. You will find therefore, that in making erasements from the Cast Book, and signing a list of parts allotted to Mrs. Lessingham, you have as little attended to the propriety you profess, as to the respect due to

Your humble servant,

G. COLMAN."

This answer was, I believe, the first circumstance that served to waken them from the trance of despotism, into which their construction of the article relative to the management had thrown them. A *negative* power it left them, but gave them no *positive* one. They told me indeed at our next meeting, that two negatives made one affirmative. I allowed the truth of that logic ; but told them, that *both together*, like the two letters in the word *no*, they made but *one* negative. I taxed Mr. Rutherford also with want of candor on this occasion, for joining to insult me without so much as inquiring into the merits of the cause ; reminding

minding him, at the same time, of the opposite conduct of his friend on a former occasion. Mr. Harris then told me, he found I was an impracticable man, and desired, or rather enjoined me to put my share to sale. Mr. Powell, who till then had only lamented our divisions in silence, was startled at this proposal, and frankly confessed that he thought such proceeding was injurious to our common interest. I told Mr. Harris that, finding I was become so disagreeable a partner to himself and Mr. Rutherford, I should retain my share, on purpose to plague them. It was, I think, at this meeting, and on this occasion, that Mr. Rutherford dwelling very much on the words *manly* and *gentleman-like*, I took occasion to tell him, in a careless manner, that I had never in my life heard those words so often repeated; but that I did not need his instruction how to behave either like a man or a gentleman. His reply to this was very violent, and ended with talking of *going out with him*, accompanying these last words with a stride towards the door. I told him I thought it rather extraordinary, that he was not contented with giving the affront, if any had been given; but that he also claimed the privilege of resentment: however, that if he supposed I was to be terrified, he was mistaken.—They then recurred to the paper in dispute, and asked if the list of parts contained in it should be considered as admissible. I objected to all the tragedy, particularly Leonora in the Revenge; and added, that Mrs. Sullen belonged to Mrs. Bulkley, and that Miss Macklin was the original Widow Belmour. They again asked, if I was inclined to oblige them. I told them my chief cause of offence was their having doubted that inclination, and having flown to acts of violence when gentle means would have been more prevalent. They then suddenly changed their tone and manner; Mrs. Lessingham, sorely against my judgment in many instances, was allowed the characters in question; and we parted once more in tolerable good humour.

Such were the expostulations of Messrs. Harris and Rutherford, and such were the injuries which I delighted to inflict on their favourite actresses. But it seems, that I *had conceived a violent pique and resentment against her, the cause of which shall not be here related*. Dark charges must, of necessity, be darkly answered; but whenever the lady, or her advocates, shall please to be more explicit, I promise to *speak plainly* in my answer, if she, or they, shall urge any thing of sufficient importance to demand one at my hands.

I allow the charge of employing *news-papers to defend gross partialities**; for I was weak enough to mention Mrs. Lessingham's having joined us, with the air of announcing a valuable accession to the strength of our company, by special paragraphs in the public papers. I must

* See Mess. R. and H.'s Narrative, p. 37.

also plead guilty to the charge of *forcing unpopular performers on a patient audience**; for on the first night of her appearance, to prevent the mortification that her vanity must suffer from a thin house, in direct opposition to the opinion of Mr. Macklin, I supported her lame performance on the crutches of *Love A-la Mode*. I also prefixed the *Stratagem*, in which she played Mrs. Sullen, to the *Oxonian in Town*, while its novelty was some recommendation to it. I had the more merit in these sacrifices, because they were made in direct contradiction to my private opinion. In the last instance, two strong objections to the measure I pursued, stared me in the face: first, that she played the part most wretchedly; and, secondly, that it was apparently injurious to a little piece, especially one of so serious a cast, to be performed after one of the lightest and pleasantest comedies in our language.

Sept. But to return. From the moment after our meeting in consequence of their memorable letter of September 19th, Messrs. Harris and Rutherford expressed the highest satisfaction at the concessions which I seemed disposed to make, and were incessantly urging me to bring forward the play of *Cymbeline*, assigning as a motive, the very reason which they now urge for opposing the repetition of it, viz. that *it was frequently exhibited at Drury Lane*†. Mr. Powell also, being extremely attached to the character of *Posthumus*, was desirous of showing himself in it, whoever might play *Imogen*. In this situation I could not have avoided exhibiting the play, however averse, without disobliging them all three, if Mr. Dall had not received orders to paint a new scene of *Imogen's chamber*; a scene which has since given the public so much satisfaction, but which then necessarily delayed the performance of the piece, into which it was to be introduced. Hence it will appear, that Mrs. Lessingham, without any competition, had been avowedly in possession of the part from the 19th of September, that is, within a week of opening the Theatre. On the 12th of October Mr. and Mrs. Oct. Yates were engaged, the history of which transaction shall be given in its proper place. From that instant, I confess, that all my notions of Mrs. Lessingham's playing the part in question vanished; for I could never suppose, that Messrs. Rutherford and Harris would be so blind to their own interests, or that Mrs. Lessingham would entertain such an overweening opinion of her own abilities, as to think of her entering into a direct competition with Mrs. Yates. However, I was soon undeceived; for on Thursday the 29th of October, they roundly insisted on Mrs. Lessingham's retaining the character, which I as roundly refused; but not without remonstrating on the gross partiality that would appear in such a procedure; as well as the injustice to Mrs. Yates, and the af-

* See Mess. R. and H.'s Narrative, p. 37. † Ibid. p. 6.

front to the public; for all which my reputation, *and chiefly mine*, would suffer. They treated these arguments with great contempt; upon which, finding nothing but further altercation likely to ensue, I abruptly left them; but I do most solemnly declare, that I did not then, or at any other time, *openly and avowedly disclaim their right to lay me under any restraint*; nor did I declare, that I would never disclose to them any of my future intentions.*

They were resolved, however, to carry this important point, if possible; and finding the *acting manager* inflexible, they not only tampered with Mr. Powell, but applied to Mrs. Yates, with whom they had a very long conference, in her dressing-room, that very evening, as will appear from the following letter, which they sent about an hour after they took their leave; and from which, together with Mrs. Yates's answer, it is not difficult to guess at the nature and subject of the conference itself.

"DEAR MADAM,

"BEING in the greatest degree desirous of proving to you, that we are not men of mere profession alone, we take the liberty to desire of you, in your note to-morrow morning, not only a favourable determination respecting the point in agitation, but that you will accompany it with such requests as will conduce to the advancement of your *Fame or Pleasure*; and our immediate answer thereto shall be the proof how much we are devoted to your desires. We are, dear Madam,

Your most humble servants,

Surry-street,
Thursday Evening, 29 Oct.

T. HARRIS,
J. RUTHERFORD.

"H. and R. beg the favour of your answer as soon as convenient in the morning, as we meet early on purpose to receive it."

Mrs. Yates's answer was as follows:

"GENTLEMEN,

"IT gives me great concern to be obliged to tell you, that I think it wholly inconsistent with my fame and interest, as well as my engagements to yourselves and the Publick, to consent to resign the part of Imogen to Mrs. Lessingham.—At the same time I cannot help adding, that it will distress me exceedingly, on this and every future occasion, if my mind is to be distracted by the different opinions of the several Gentlemen concerned in the management. I am, Sir, &c.

M. A. YATES.

To this she received the following reply:

"DEAR MADAM,

"WE have this instant received your favour—hope for your pardon for the trouble we have given you; and finding an application to you so ineffectual, you may dismiss all fears of our disturbing your mind by any future one. We are, and shall always be, Dear Madam, Your devoted humble servants,

Surry-street,
Tuesday morn. Oct. 30.

T. HARRIS.
J. RUTHERFORD."

* See Mess. R. and H.'s Narrative, p. 9.

Oct. 30. The next morning, while I was attending a rehearsal at the theatre, I received the following letter, to which I immediately returned the answer subjoined. From these it will appear, that Messrs. Harris and Rutherford were the first persons that threatened an appeal to the Publick, as they have, in fact, to our great astonishment, been the first who have made such an appeal.

“ S I R,

“ THE very gross manner in which you thought proper, yesterday, to conduct yourself, being so entirely repugnant to the articles we have entered into with you, as well as to the principles upon which you have verbally professed to govern yourself on a late reconciliation, we cannot suffer it to pass without informing you, that until you shall make the concessions due to us for such a notorious breach of good faith, we shall pursue a mode of conduct that will be influenced by the keen resentment you have inspired us with. Yet shall take no *unwarrantable* steps, nor any that we cannot justify to the Publick, who will most probably be acquainted with every part of our proceedings; and however your importance may suffer by your having overrated it, is a circumstance of which you are the sole author, and must therefore abide by the consequences.

Surry Street,
Friday morning, Oct. 29th.

T. HARRIS.
J. RUTHERFORD.”

“ GENTLEMEN,

“ I NEVER did, nor ever will do any thing repugnant to our articles. The very gross manner in which you and Mrs. Lessingham have always treated me, obliges me to exert to the utmost the power those articles give me. Your keen resentment does not terrify me, nor ever shall, while I know I can justify my conduct to our royal master, the lord-chamberlain, and the publick; to all whom I am very willing to submit it.

Covent Garden, Friday morning, Oct. 29, 1767.

G. COLMAN.”

This answer was received by Messrs. Harris and Rutherford, at the house of Mr. Powell, who, on every dispute, had always done every thing in his power to reconcile the parties to each other, and was then actually employed in exerting his best endeavours for that purpose. On the receipt of my letter, they both broke out into the most violent passion. One proposed to *attack my favourites*; and, in the first place, to *dismiss Mr. Younger*, (the prompter) *because he was useful to me in my business*. It then occurred to exercise their *negative power*, by prohibiting the exhibition of the Oxonian in Town, which was then in rehearsal; but that suggestion was, on second thoughts, opposed, because it would be doing me a favour, *as the piece would certainly be damned*.

Oct. 30. In short, the dispute now grew warm indeed, and the very same evening I received a letter from Mr. Harris, to which, on the very same evening, I returned an answer. The letter and answer are as follow:

S I R.

“ S I R,

“ YOU have asserted you never did any thing repugnant to our articles. Are you not by them obliged to submit every thing to our consideration? Have you done so? We have neither of us any thing to do with Mrs. Lessingham's treatment of you; you say it has been very gross; I believe that, as well as your first assertion, to be most false. You seem determined, upon every dispute, to bring that lady's conduct into question, in order to avail yourself of it as a favourable plea with the Publick; now that I hold to be most pitiful and infamous. You are very welcome, Sir, to my life, if you dare any how to hazard the taking it. I am going out of town this evening, at six o'clock, and shall return to-morrow about that time. If I hear nothing from you then, know, that your ungenerous, unmanly behaviour has made me upon every occasion of life your enemy.

Surry-street, Friday noon, Oct. 30.

T. HARRIS.”

“ S I R,

“ AS Mrs. Lessingham has been the sole cause of every dispute between us, it was very natural, as well as proper, for me to mention her name; and as to the gross treatment with which I charged her, yourself, and Mr. Rutherford, I have the proofs of it under all your hands; so that the falsehood, meanness, pitifulness, and infamy, do not lie on my side. As to my daring to take your life, God knows I dare not do it; but you and every other man shall find that I dare on all occasions to defend my own: wherefore your professed friendship or professed enmity are in that respect equally indifferent to

Great Queen street, Friday evening, Oct. 30, 1767.

G. COLMAN.”

To THOMAS HARRIS, Esq.

The next evening Mr. Rutherford came to the theatre alone, and interrupting Mr. Powell during the play, in the midst of his anxieties in a new part, spoke of me in such terms, that Mr. Powell thought it improper for us to meet; Mr. Rutherford, however, sending to desire to speak with me, I came to him. He said that he had nothing to do with what had past between Mr. Harris and me, but that he now came to inform me, *that I was no longer sole manager of that theatre*; of which publick notice would be given to the performers on Monday morning in the Green Room. I smiled, and asked, if it was worth while to send for me merely to communicate such a piece of intelligence? My indifference threw him into a violent passion. He began to swear: I walked away. He followed, and desired to speak with me: I refused to have any thing further to say to him.

On the same evening, just after the play was over, the prompter received the following letter, to which he sent the respectful answer annexed: but, respectful as it was, *it gave the highest cause of offence* to Messrs. Rutherford and Harris, from whom it drew the two letters here subjoined to it, in which they have most flagrantly exceeded the power given them by our articles, by assuming the power of dismissal from the theatre.

" Mr. YOUNGER. S I R,

" YOU are to cause the inclosed paper to be immediately placed in a conspicuous part of the Green-room, and to return us an answer, specifying the precise time of your receiving the same.

Sir, your humble servants,

Surry street, Oct. 31, 1767,
15 minutes past nine.

T. HARRIS.
J. RUTHERFORD."

The inclosed paper.

" UNTIL farther notice, any order from a single manager of this theatre will be void and of no effect.

Saturday,
Oct. 31st.

T. HARRIS.
J. RUTHERFORD."

" GENTLEMEN,

" AS I shall ever retain a proper respect for all my employers, I flatter myself you will, upon a moment's reflexion, not wish to so far embroil me in the unhappy dispute at present subsisting, as to insist on my doing what must render me obnoxious to some of the parties concerned. I am with due respect, Gentlemen,

Your most humble servant,

Saturday, half an hour past 10.

JOS. YOUNGER."

" S I R,

" MR. YOUNGER, prompter of Covent Garden theatre, having given the highest cause of offence to us, we inform you, that we desire he may have notice immediately of his dismissal from our service.

Surry street, Saturday Oct. 31, 1767.
three quarters past 11 at night.

T. HARRIS.
J. RUTHERFORD."

To GEO. COLMAN, Esq.

" S I R,

" THE salary paid to Mr. Younger, heretofore prompter of our theatre, ceased this day. You are therefore to forbear any future payments to him. We are,

Sir, your humble servants,

Saturday night,
Oct. 31, 1767,

T. HARRIS.
J. RUTHERFORD."

To Mr GARTON.

Mr. Powell, quite unhappy to see our differences running to such a length, and desirous to do every thing in his power to heal them, prevailed on a very intimate friend of mine, to accompany him the next morning to confer with Messrs. Rutherford and Harris on the subject, at the house of the latter, in Surry-street. I was far from wishing or desiring that any friend of mine should involve himself in my disputes; and I now shudder to think, that this gentleman's kind and friendly interposition in my affairs, has very recently exposed him to the most imminent danger of his life; the loss of which would have destroyed all the future peace and quiet of my own, though I was no further necessary to what followed, than in being the unhappy and innocent occasion.

The

The good offices of my friend and Mr. Powell proved wholly ineffectual. Messrs. Rutherford and Harris would hear of no other terms than an abolition of our present articles, and the execution of new ones, to be framed by their own direction. This was their *ultimatum*; and thus concluded this fruitless negotiation of a treaty for peace. Being informed, by Mr. Powell, of their terms, I sent them the following letter; in which I rejected their proposal of new articles, by shewing that I meant to abide by those at present subsisting between us.

"GENTLEMEN,

"I HAVE seen Mr. Powell; but after what has passed, a personal intercourse between us cannot be expected. According to our articles I shall, from time to time, submit to your consideration the measures I propose to pursue in the management of the theatre; and any measure against which you shall jointly protest in writing, according to our articles, shall not be carried into execution.

Nov. 1, 1767.

G. COLMAN."

Mr. Powell, finding their violence impossible to be mitigated, and thinking our property in the greatest danger from their method of proceeding, now, for the first time, declared on my side: and foreseeing the tumult likely to ensue, from the steps which Mess. Rutherford and Harris had declared their resolutions of taking the next morning, thought it advisable to prevent that confusion as far as possible, by collecting as many of the performers as could be found that day, and laying before them a fair state of the case. On this occasion I related the story in the plainest terms, read the letters which authenticated my narrative, and *fairly stated* the article relative to the management, reciting the *negative power* lodged with Mess. Rutherford and Harris, as well as the *positive* one vested in me. *Read* the article, indeed, I could not, as I then had no copy of it. For the truth of these circumstances, I appeal to all the parties then present.

The next morning the tumult, so vehemently threatened on their part, and patiently expected on our own, actually ensued. About eleven o'clock Mess. Harris and Rutherford came on the stage, and interrupted the rehearsal. They asked me, in an authoritative tone, if I had dismissed Mr. Younger? I answered, No.—Will you dismiss him? No.—Some time after this, Mr. Rutherford said, *Did not we ORDER you to dismiss Younger?*—ORDER me, Sir!—He immediately recanted the imperious word *order*, and was polite enough to substitute the gentler term *desire*. He read the article in an audible voice on the stage to the performers, and afterwards asked them if they would continue to act under Mr. Colman's management. They answered, Yes.

Mr.

Mr. Rutherford, misunderstanding Mr. Smith, and supposing that he meant to assent to *their* direction, said with great heat, *I am obliged to you, Sir; you are a gentleman.* Mr. Smith, however, being asked by another performer to *what* he had answered *yes*, said, that his *Yes* implied an assent to act under Mr. Colman. *Why then, gentlemen,* said Mr. Rutherford, *I will tell you one thing for your comfort; the Theatre will be shut up, for we shall apply to the court of chancery for an injunction for that purpose.* Soon after these transactions, Mrs. Mattocks fainted away, and I ran among others into the common Green-Room to her assistance. During my absence, a difference arose between my friend and Mr. Rutherford, in consequence whereof he and Mr. Harris left the stage, to which I returned a few seconds before their retiring to the great Green-Room.

Nov. 2. In less than half an hour, Mr. Powell came and told me, that Mess. Harris and Rutherford were inclined to a reconciliation, if I would but consent to the dismissal of Mr. Younger for five minutes. I replied, that provided his dismissal should be *literally* for five minutes, I would assent to it, since they thought the form so necessary to save appearances. I own I did not see why they were so well inclined to terms of peace, which they so peremptorily refused the morning before; but being very deeply affected at the part Nov. 2. which my friend had taken in this affair, I was willing to do every thing in my power to promote a thorough reconciliation on all sides. Accordingly I accompanied Mr. Powell into the great Green-Room; and being asked by Mr. Harris *whether I would carry on the management without doing any thing contrary to the article?* I replied, to the best of my knowledge and belief, in these words: *I never DID any thing contrary to the article: I never MEANT to do any thing contrary to our article. All I desire is to manage according to the article, and to have an uninterrupted exercise of the power which the article gives me.* Mess. Woodward, Smith, Gibson, &c. were present: to them I appeal for the truth of this relation; and to them I appeal whether * *I apparently took shame to myself on this occasion.*

The gentlemen, however, preserved the decorums of resentment to the last, and thought it necessary, on the very moment of our reconciliation, to commit a fresh violation of the article in question, by writing the following note to the treasurer of the Theatre:

“ S I R,

“ MR. YOUNGER being reinstated as a prompter, you are to continue the payments of his salary as heretofore.

Monday,
Nov. 2, 1767.

T. HARRIS.
J. RUTHERFORD.”

Mr. GARTON.

• See the printed Narrative, p. 11.

A reconciliation being thus effected, Mr. Harris desired, Nov. 3.
 that as the play of Cymbeline had been so much the object of conversation and dispute, it might be laid aside for the present. Accordingly it was so; and the appearance of a good understanding among us was once more restored. But it was with the utmost difficulty that Mess. Harris and Rutherford preserved these appearances; for, instead of each of them favouring me with their advice in a friendly manner, they were continually sending me letters formally signed by them both. This was so directly opposite to their professions, that I expostulated with Mr. Harris on the subject, and told him, that I was in hopes we were now to have gone on as friends, without recurring, in every little instance, to the article, and reminding each other of the extent and limits of our respective power; but that if I saw him and his friend resolved to drive me, on every occasion, to the ground of the article, I would stand on that ground, and defend it to the last; for that I very well knew how much and how little power that article gave me. Mr. Harris replied, that we had all just power enough to plague each other; and, to convince me that he might easily be induced to exercise that power on his part, he added, that the breach between us had been so very wide, that it would not readily close again, without the most sincere desires and endeavours on all sides. I professed the greatest readiness to promote so desirable an end; but the gentlemen were so little inclined to meet me half-way, that they still continued the same mode of behaviour which had led me to the above-mentioned expostulation. In short, I plainly saw that they never would forget or forgive the transactions of the second of November.

About the latter end of that month, while things were in this Novemb.
 situation, Mr. Dall had finished the scene intended for Cymbeline. This redoubled Mr. Powell's impatience and anxiety to exhibit the play; and he applied to Mess. Harris and Rutherford (particularly the former) in the most earnest and submissive terms, to wave their objections to it. Mr. Harris was inexorable; Mr. Rutherford said, that we ought not to perform it *without asking Mrs. Lessingham's leave*; and referred the farther consideration of it to our next meeting.

One little occurrence, that happened about this time, will perhaps shew the temper and complexion of these gentlemen, more than a matter of more consequence. The prompter had orders to send them every evening an account of the rehearsal settled for the next morning, and at the end of every week a plan of my arrangement of plays for the week ensuing. One of these notes was as follows:

S I R,

“ S I R,

“ MR. MACKLIN's withdrawing his farce having rendered it necessary to change the business proposed for this week, Mr. Colman has ordered me to send you the fresh plan he has now settled. —

Your most humble servant,

J. Y.”

This was addressed to Mr. Rutherford. The like note was addressed to Mr. Harris, only concluding with the word *fixed* instead of *settled*, as in the above. Mr. Harris was so touched at this expression, that he asked the prompter if the note was dictated by Mr. Colman. The prompter replied in the negative. Mr. Harris then commented on the word *fixed*; and observed, that if the business was *fixed* by Mr. Colman, there was no need of submitting the plan of it to them. Being informed of this circumstance, I enjoined the prompter to use the term *proposed* or *intended* for the future; a caution which I believe he has ever since religiously observed.

Dec. The prompter's note of December the fifth ran thus:

Plan of Business proposed for next Week.

Monday, Dec. 7th. (*By particular desire*) Fair Penitent, and Faustus.

8th. Mahomet, and Musical Lady.

9th. Philaster, and Apprentice, for the Fund.

10th. Othello, and Love-a-la-Mode.

11th. Royal Merchant.

12th. Orphan, and — Mrs. La Roche.

“ S I R,

“ MR. COLMAN has ordered me to send you the above plan of business, *proposed* for the ensuing week, and to acquaint you that he has received notice from his Majesty, that the first time he honours this theatre with his royal presence, will be to the play of Cymbeline; for which reason he has ordered it to be put into rehearsal next week.

I am, Sir, your most humble servant,

J. YOUNGER.”

“ P. S. THE author of the farce has been with Mr. Colman to withdraw it, and is to call for the copy on Monday morning; must therefore beg Mr. Colman may have it by that time.”

Rehearsal on Monday next.

Mahomet at 10.

Musical Lady at 12.

To J. RUTHERFORD, Esq.

On the Tuesday and Wednesday following, the letters here subjoined passed between us.

DEAR

" DEAR SIR,

" WE are very happy to receive your information, that we may speedily expect the honour of his Majesty's presence; but we could have wished his Majesty had not been pleased to command Cymbeline

As cogent reasons might be given why that play should not be performed; we shall never think you treat us fairly unless it is for the present postponed.

The appointment of the new opera for Friday next, we suppose, was an oversight in you; that being the * author's benefit at Drury Lane, would be deemed in the highest degree illiberal in us to produce a new piece on that night, and is a measure we cannot by any means assent to. It may be played for the first time on Thursday next, as at first proposed, or any other day (excepting as before) that you shall think most proper. We are, very cordially,

Dear Sir, your most humble servants,

Dec. 8th. 8 o'clock evening.

T. HARRIS.
J. RUTHERFORD."

" GENTLEMEN,

" YOUR intimation of *my not treating you fairly*, in the beginning of your letter, does not carry that air of cordiality which you profess in the conclusion of it. If there are such cogent reasons for disobeying his Majesty's commands, it would have been kind in you to have suggested them, as I must confess that none occurred to me which I durst have submitted to his royal notice. The opera cannot be ready on Thursday, and must therefore be postponed till next week. I confess I never thought of the author's sixth night; and as the first night of the opera stood for Friday, in the plan of business sent you, it is pity it did not occur to you sooner, as we shall probably be considerable sufferers by the alteration; not to mention the great hardship on the composer, who is detained from Bath, to his great inconvenience.

I am, Gentlemen, your most humble servant,

Covent Garden, Dec. 9, 1767.

G. COLMAN."

" S I R,

" YOUR charging us with inconsistency in your *last*, can only be occasioned by your haste in reading it: *the air of cordiality which we professed in the conclusion*, was in confidence that reasons sufficient would occur to you why Cymbeline should be postponed.

Cymbeline not being (as we are informed) in the list of plays sent to his Majesty, and the scenery, decorations, casting, &c. &c. not being yet fixed on, you may most certainly dare to submit reasons to his Majesty's royal notice why Cymbeline cannot for the present be exhibited, if your passion to oppose our inclinations does not sway you in a ten times greater degree, than your desire to comply with what is pretended to be the choice of his Majesty.

We are very sorry the opera has not been got ready long since, and that the composer should sustain the injury of being kept in town; but still remain of opinion, that if the opera cannot appear on Thursday evening, as was at first settled, in regard to all our reputations, it cannot be produced before next Monday. We are, Sir,

Your most obedient servants,

Surry street, Dec. 9, 1767.

T. HARRIS.
J. RUTHERFORD."

* Mr. Kenrick, author of the Widow'd Wife.

Dec. 10. The next day I met them at the Theatre, and fairly told them, that it was impossible for me to proceed in the management, while they so studiously endeavoured to take every occasion to make me uneasy; that Cymbeline was in the list of plays submitted to his majesty at the beginning of the season; but to convince them that I did not want to carry any points but such as were conducive to the general interest, which I had always meant to pursue, I was resolved to refer my conduct to those who had embarked their property with us, and to their own friends in particular; that it was a wanton piece of cruelty to be perpetually trying to make my mind miserable, when my labours rather deserved their thanks; that I had been a voluntary slave in the conduct of their property; but that I was extremely hurt on their seeming inclined to treat me like a servant in every particular, except that of paying me wages.

They received this expostulation on my part with more temper and moderation than usual. They declared that they had repeatedly, and on all occasions, professed how much they thought themselves obliged to me; and no longer insisted on my representing to their Majesties that we could not obey their Royal Commands respecting the exhibition of Cymbeline. Mr. Rutherford, a day or two after, lamented the little bickering at this meeting, professing the warmest cordiality towards me on his side, and vouching for the same sentiments on behalf of his friend Mr. Harris.

Decemb. The rehearsals of Cymbeline were then continued without farther interruption or remonstrance; and on Monday the twenty-eighth of December the representation of the play was honoured with the presence of their Majesties; after whose departure the plays, as usual, were announced, and, among the rest, Cymbeline.
Dec. 28. again for the succeeding Thursday, which occasioned the following notes:

Monday Evening, 10 o'clock, Dec. 28th.

"MR. HARRIS and Mr. Rutherford present compliments to Mr. Colman.—Are much concerned that he directed Cymbeline to be given out this evening. Mr. Colman is well acquainted with their sentiments on that subject, and how much it is their desire that Cymbeline should for the present be postponed. They doubt not he will conduct this circumstance accordingly."

"MR. COLMAN presents his compliments to Mess. Harris and Rutherford, and is equally concerned and surprized at their repugnance to the repetition of Cymbeline; which is the more unexpected, as he mentioned to Mr. Harris his intention to have given it out for the next night, had it not been for the indisposition of Mr. Powell. He flatters himself they must do him the justice to acknowledge the delicacy which has been used towards them in this point. As this play had unhappily been the cause of dissension, it was laid aside for a time, and at length resumed and performed

performed by the express command of their Majesties; to whose royal orders it would appear an indirect affront, to discontinue a performance, so likely to redound to the interest and credit of the theatre; at the same time that such a conduct would be a publick confirmation of the evil reports of disputes amongst the managers. From this and many other considerations which their own good sense will suggest to them, Mr. Colman flatters himself, that on cool reflection, they will chearfully concur with himself and Mr. Powell."

Dec. 29th.

"THE compliments of Mr. Rutherford and Mr. Harris wait on Mr. Colman. It is certain Mr. C. did mention his design of giving out Cymbeline to Mr. H. which exceedingly surprized him; but Mr. H. was very happy to hear it was to be deferred, both on account of the hatred he ever bears, and the unwillingness he has about him always to enter into altercation, and that there would be time to take Mr. R's opinion. The advice of their friends, joined to their coolest reflection, still suggests to them the absolute impropriety of representing the play of Cymbeline again so soon as proposed.

Their united and most sincere wishes are, that this little difference may end here, and no more may ever arise; and that Mr. C. will, in some degree, pay attention to *their sentiments*: seeing *that* will make their happiness consist in *entirely pursuing* those of Mr. C.

Surry street, Tuesday one o'clock.

I was now credibly informed that, during the rehearsal of the play, wagers had been laid by some, who were of their *privy-council*, that Cymbeline would never be performed but *once*. We had been at great expence in the decorations, which were much approved; the play was esteemed a creditable performance; and there was a great demand for places against any future representation of it, not to repeat the duty incumbent on us to testify the utmost respect to the Royal Order by which it had been revived at our Theatre. The expences bestowed on the play had been incurred with the consent and approbation of Mess. Harris and Rutherford, in whom it was therefore the more unreasonable to preclude our reaping the profits that might result from them. It appeared also impossible to keep terms with men, who were for ever seeking occasions of dispute. On these considerations I made no reply to the above note, and continued to advertise the play.

On Wednesday, Dec. 30, past the following letters:

"S I R,

"WE absolutely disapprove the performance of Cymbeline at our theatre until further consideration.

Wednesday, Dec. 30, 1767.

T. HARRIS.
J. RUTHERFORD."

To GEORGE COLMAN, Esq.

" S I R,

" Our right to forbid the representation of the above play we draw from the articles entered into by yourself and us ; from your letter of the first day of Nov. last, (which runs thus, " Any measure against which you shall jointly protest in writing shall not be carried into execution) ; and from your solemn declaration, to the same purport, in presence of Mess. Woodward, Smith, Gibson, &c. on the 2d of the said November.

It is with the less regret that we write in this absolute manner, as our repeated desires, signified in the most respectful manner, have failed to make the least impression.

We are your humble servants,

Surry street, Dec. 30th.

T. HARRIS.
J. RUTHERFORD."

To GEO. COLMAN, Esq.

" GENTLEMEN,

" I HAVE just received your mandate, and will print it as a reason to the Publick for performing no play to-morrow.

Dec. 30, 1767.

G. COLMAN,"

" GENTLEMEN,

" GREAT part of our boxes being taken for the play of Cymbeline, great damage must accrue to my property, by your method of proceeding ; I must therefore apply to my friends and the Publick for redress. I most sincerely concur with Mr. Colman's sentiments above, and shall abide by his determination. I am,

Your most humble servant,

W. POWELL."

" S I R,

" IF you refuse to give directions for a play to-morrow night, we shall : whether they will be obeyed or not, is for future consideration. What you are pleased to call our mandate, can be no reason for shutting up the theatre, as you have the whole circle of the drama (Cymbeline excepted) from whence to elect a play.

Whatever damages may arise, we doubt not will be at your peril, as they can only ensue from your committing a breach of the most solemn and legal engagements.

We are, Sir, your humble servants.

Surry street, Wednesday Dec. 30, 1767,
4 o'clock, P. M.

T. HARRIS.
J. RUTHERFORD."

The following notes to the Prompter, with his minutes annexed, will shew the other particulars relative to this transaction :

" MR. Rutherford is greatly surpris'd that Mr. Younger did not, as usual, send him on Saturday last the plan of the ensuing week's business. — Desires that he will be careful not to omit it in future, and that he will this evening send to Mr. Rutherford the account of plays intended for the remainder of the week."

Newman-street, Wednesday noon, 30th Dec.

" N. B. I gave the plan of the week's business, as usual, on Saturday night to Sam. Besford, for both Mr. Rutherford and Mr. Harris ; but sending for him on Sunday

Sunday morning, (before he had delivered them) and giving him a fresh one for each concerning the command, he thought the first of no consequence and burnt them.— I received the note above at one o'clock, and directly took the boy with me to Mr. Harris, where the porter said Mr. Rutherford was, and told him as above: he said I need take no farther trouble, he would explain it to Mr. Rutherford."

Second Letter.

"MR. Harris and Mr. Rutherford desire Mr. Younger would not fail to come down to them directly, if he can do it without injury to the representation of the opera; otherwise to come to them immediately after the opera is over."

Surry-street, Wednesday seven o'clock, 30th Dec.

"WENT directly; and on their asking what orders I had for to-morrow, told them Mr. Colman had informed me of their interdiction of Cymbeline, and that he would give no other order; but that Mr. Powell was at the house, and said he would give it out. I also told them the Merchant of Venice and Love-a-la-mode was designed for Friday, and Philaster for Saturday.—They gave me no order of any kind (except to send them word of what was to be rehearsed next morning)—but said they sent for me to have ordered a play, if Mr. Colman refused doing so, as his letter to them mentioned."

Dec. 31. Sent for by Mess. Harris and Rutherford to Surry-street: told them Mr. Powell ordered the giving out of the play last night, and sent himself the bills to the printer; and that Mr. Colman had given no theatrical orders since, though I breakfasted with him.

J. Y. Prompter."

Open hostilities were now recommenced, and every effort of spleen and resentment was exerted to distress Mr. Powell and myself in the conduct of the Theatre. The *single cause of difference* was not, however, to be avowed; but ** repeated and aggravated causes* were to be supposed. The very day before, if I would but pay due attention to their sentiments, they would *intirely pursue* mine: but if not, they would not only oppose my sentiments, it seems, but endeavour to blacken and asperse both our characters with the charges of fraud and collusion: but when the reader has gone through these sheets, I will submit it to his decision, in what quarter there has been the most appearance of *collusion*.

They begun their first attack on the exchequer, and sent the following letter to the Treasurer of the Theatre:

Dec. 30,

"Mr. GARTON. SIR,

"YOU'LL please to prepare your accounts for our inspection next Friday morning nine o'clock; and you are on no account to disburse any monies between this and that time, when you will have further directions.

SIR, Your most humble servants,

Wednesday night,
Dec. 30th, 1767.

T. HARRIS.
J. RUTHERFORD."

* See printed Narrative, p. 33.

Dec. 31. They next attempted to storm the wardrobe, as will appear by the following letters between them and Mr. Powell.

"SIR,

"WE desire you will present our compliments to Mrs. Powell, and acquaint her that we desire she will be pleased to send every thing in her possession appertaining to the Theatre to the wardrobe-keeper's office, as we intend forthwith to examine the state of both wardrobes:—that you will also inform her how much we are obliged to her for the trouble she has hitherto incurred;—but request she would not make any further purchase on account of the Theatre, as we shall give directions to the Treasurer to pay nothing but incidental charges, until previously consented to by us.

Your humble servants,

Surry-street,
Thursday evening, 31st Dec. 1767.

T. HARRIS,
J. RUTHERFORD."

"GENTLEMEN,

"YOUR directions to Mrs. Powell cannot be complied with.—The unappropriated cloaths belonging to the Theatre have ever been kept out of the house under the care of one of the proprietors; they are now in my possession, always free for your inspection, and forthcoming for the proper use of the Theatre.—However you may esteem Mrs. Powell for the care and trouble she has taken to herself concerning the property, I believe every gentleman that has made any advance in the purchase, when they are acquainted with it, will think themselves greatly obliged to her. Whatever your doubts may be for the safety of that part of your property in my possession, I know not; but this I know, that my conduct has hitherto been such, as not to have my honesty, or Mrs. Powell's, called in question: so that you may be assured, your property is ever safe with either of us.

Your humble Servant,

1st January, 1768.

W. POWELL."

To Messrs. H. and R.

"P. S. Mr. Colman, by our articles, is invested with the theatrical as well as dramatic direction of the Theatre; and the care of the women's wardrobe and that of the men's was desired by Mr. Colman to be taken by Mrs. Powell and myself, without any objection made on your parts; and therefore we shall pay every attention to the department for the good of the property and the pleasure of the publick: and you must give me leave to tell you, that you shall find I am not that *cypher*, even according to our present article, as you seem by your treatment to imagine.

I am yours,

W. POWELL."

Here it may not be improper to mention, that there had been some little altercation the preceding day, concerning a dress for Mrs. Lessingham; that lady having taken great offence, from not being indulged with a gown and petticoat to play a chamber-maid in the *Clandestine Marriage*. The directions to Mrs. Powell we interpreted as an intended insult to her husband, and the request to desist from further purchases as a new mode

mode of distressing and embarrassing us in our affairs: but it was almost impossible to conceive or imagine that they meant to ground a charge of fraud or collusion in this circumstance, after they had, by the advice of Mrs. Rich, approved of keeping the unappropriated cloaths out of the wardrobe; and had not only joined with me in desiring Mrs. Powell to take the care of them, but agreed to purchase Mr. Rich's dwelling-house adjoining to the Theatre for the residence of Mr. and Mrs. Powell, allowing a very large abatement of the rent, in consideration of their reserving a room for the occasional meetings of the managers, and other apartments for the purpose of lodging therein the unappropriated cloaths.

As Mess. Harris and Rutherford were now to stand forward as acting managers, no circumstance, however minute, tending to im-
Jan. 2.
 press an idea of their importance, was to be neglected or over-looked. On the second of January therefore the Treasurer of the Theatre received the following :

“ Mr. GARTON. SIR,

“ IT would have been proper in you to have advertised the different tradesmen of the just form of address to their respective bills—which should have been thus: *Harris, Rutherford, Colman, and Powell*; that being the form in which the patent, &c. is conveyed to us.

“ The bills we now send you, as far as we are concerned, you are at liberty to pay, with the reservation express'd—excepting those which are differently subscrib'd.

Are, Sir, Your most humble servants,

Surry-street,
 Saturday, Jan. 2d, 1768.

T. HARRIS.
 J. RUTHERFORD.”

If the reader recollects the dialogue with the Prompter touching the word *fixed*, he will not be so much surpris'd at the above reprimand to the Treasurer. Proper orders, however, were immediately issued to the tradesmen; and it is hoped that all who may hereafter be employed in the service of Covent-Garden Theatre, will remember to address their respective bills to Mess. Harris and Co.

The same day I received the following :

“ SIR,

“ THERE is now so much time elapsed since you were *paid* for your intended alterations of the tragedy of King Lear, that we think proper to desire you forthwith to produce the play, or pay the sum you have received on that account *again* into the treasury of the Theatre.

“ If you will take the latter propos'd method, it will be by far the most agreeable to

Your humble servants,

Surry-street,
 Saturday Morning, 2d Jan. 1768.

T. HARRIS.
 J. RUTHERFORD.”

Knowing

Knowing the unquiet spirits of the writers, I looked upon this letter, as well as that to Mr. Powell, to be nothing more than a fresh
 Jan. 2. insult, that their resentments to me might keep pace with their instances of spleen to Mr. Powell. I must own I never expected to be called on for a justification of my character in a transaction of this nature ; and I am very well convinced, that the gentlemen themselves never thought of exhibiting so scandalous a charge, till after the second representation of the play of Cymbeline. This, and the other assertions relative to Mr. Powell's going to Bristol, as well as the insinuations concerning the wardrobe, and Mrs. Yates's engagement, will appear to be the most exceptionable parts of Mess. Harris and Rutherford's conduct. Passion is a human frailty, and therefore in some degree excusable ; but rancour and malice, supported by falsehood, are diabolical.

The affairs of the wardrobe have been already considered. The matters of King Lear, and Mr. Powell's going to Bristol in the summer, were
 Nov. 26. both agitated so long ago as on Thursday the 26th of November, and the substance of what past was as follows :

I told them that the money arising from my night, as author of the Oxonian in Town, lay as yet in the office ; but that as I was, by our articles, to be paid for every thing which I did in such a capacity, I would, if they thought proper, take *the clear receipt* of the house that night, as a consideration for my insertions in the Rehearsal at the opening of the Theatre, and my alteration of King Lear ; adding, that the alteration of Lear had given me more trouble than that of Philaster, for which I had a night at Drury-Lane ; but that as it did not absolutely add a play to our catalogue, and as it was a work I should never have undertaken had I not been engaged in the direction of a theatre, I should be very well contented with such a consideration for my trouble. They asked if I had not better refer all those matters to the end of the season. I replied, with all my heart ; that I did not mean to ask it as a favour ; but that as I believed I should do nothing more of that sort this year, and as the money happened to be in the office, those circumstances had induced me to mention the matter at that time. Mr. Powell declared his opinion, that the demand was a very moderate one, and that he thought I might very reasonably have claimed a night. I said that, whenever I produced my alteration of the Silent Woman, I should be undoubtedly entitled to one for that piece ; but in the present instance I should be very well satisfied with the sum then in the office : whereupon it was unanimously agreed, that I should take out the clear receipt, which amounted to 64*l.* 5*s.* more than was due to me as author of the Oxonian in Town. The above letter, insolent as it is, does not deny my having been *paid* by their consent ; but it is particularly happy for me, that Mr. Hutchinson,
 a gentle-

a gentleman whose integrity has heretofore extorted even their approbation, was present at this scene, and can vouch for the truth of this relation.

But, says the invidious note to the printed Narrative*, This is a *customary liberty taken from time to time with this play in the representation; and, particularly, by the celebrated manager of Drury Lane, who, we are assured, never charged a single farthing to his brother patentee for such services*. If the celebrated manager of Drury Lane had ever attempted to execute my projected plan of altering King Lear, my labours on this occasion would undoubtedly have been superseded; *but that he never charged a single farthing to his brother patentee for such services*†, both he and his brother patentee know to be false; and that justly celebrated manager himself, more than once, proposed to me to join with him in a *reform of the theatre*, wherein those pieces which did not require so much alteration as to entitle the new editor to a benefit-night, were to be rewarded by a *certain sum* for each play. My revival of King Lear falls directly under that description; and, I believe, the manager himself will allow, that I have had no more than a *quantum meruit* for my trouble; nay, I will submit to be tried by a theatrical jury, with that manager, as he ever ought to be, at their head; and I will forfeit double the sum, if my foreman does not bring me in *not guilty*. That he has been paid for his services is most certain, as it is most certain; that he has been paid no more than he has very fairly earned. He was pleased to tell me, that I should find my trouble, as acting-manager, would very well deserve 500 l. a year; and to add, that he would give my partners 500 l. a year, if they would not suffer me to be acting-manager. These were his sentiments and expressions at that time; but, as Abraham says in Harlequin's Invasion, *those happy days are over*.

The other affair stands thus:

On the 28th of May, when the article relative to Mr. Powell's salary, &c. was signed, when Mr. Hutchinson, who prepared it, May 28. first read that clause, wherein it was to be agreed, that *none of the*

* See their Narrative, p. 13.

† On a revival of this page, and a second reference to their printed Narrative, I find, that their note in p. 13, concerning *the customary liberty taken with this play in representation*, alludes to the play of *The Rehearsal*; not to King Lear. In that instance Mr. Shuter, as well as every former *Bays*, took the same liberty, and charged nothing extraordinary for such services. But the usual *extempore* pleasantries of the actor in this character, are very different in point of quantity, not to say quality, from those written additions which they are pleased to call *the insertion of a few lines* ‡. How much of the 64l. 5s. Mess. R. and H. are pleased to charge to this account, I cannot tell; but my agreement gave me an undoubted right to receive a consideration for them: and, few and trifling as they are pleased to call these additions, on whatever occasion they shall produce the like, I will convince them I have not been over-paid.

‡ Mess. R. and H.'s Narrative, p. 13.

parties should, after the first of October, 47, write, or have any concern in any other theatre, Mr. Powell absolutely refused to sign it, alledging the necessity he should be under to retain his property at Bristol, at least for some years, in justice both to himself and his family; who, notwithstanding the emoluments that might accrue from our intended purchase, would be extremely distressed and pinched in their income, till

May 28. he had paid off the money, principal as well as interest, borrowed on the occasion. After two or three hours debate, he, with great reluctance, set his hand to the article; and I will venture to say, that my arguments and warmth on the occasion induced him to consent to it. At the same time, to mark our sense of his compliance in this instance, he was promised, by Messrs. Harris and Rutherford, as well as myself, that * *to indemnify him, in some measure at least, for the loss he should sustain by not acting at Bristol in the summer,* should be a matter of our future consideration.

After the completion of the purchase, and our opening the theatre, Mr. Powell frequently took occasion to mention this matter, and desired to know on what footing this affair was to stand, that he might determine in what manner to conduct himself, in regard to his connections in Bristol. Mess. Rutherford and Harris, for a long time, found means to evade giving a determinate answer; but, on the 26th of November, Mr. Powell desiring a categorical answer, they told him they would give him leave to go to Bristol; that they had altered their sentiments on this head, and conceived the reputation of each patentee to be as distinct as his person, and that the actions of one individual would be no derogation to the character of another; that they were even reduced, though with great regret, to *plead poverty* on the occasion; for, as the money laid down for the purchase was not all their own, what with the payment of interest, and the large incomes they had given up by abandoning trade, their abilities to oblige Mr. Powell did not keep pace with their inclinations; besides which, it was to be considered, that both Mr. Powell and myself derived emoluments from the theatre, in which they had no share: but however, * *to show their unwillingness to deprive him of any pecuniary advantage, they assented to his going;* and ordered Mr. Hutchinson to draw up a proper form of permission, in writing, on the spot, to be immediately signed by Mr. Colman and themselves. To this, however, Mr. Colman would by no means consent, saying, that he originally opposed Mr. Powell's going to Bristol *propter dignitatem*, thinking it inconsistent with his present situation; but that if they had surmounted that obstacle, he had no stronger objections to urge against it; though he would never suffer it to appear under his hand,

* See their printed Narrative, p. 14.

† Ibid. p. 15.

that,

that, for the sake of refusing some *rascal counters to his friend*, he would suffer him to bring an imputation on them all. To shew however, that he did not mean to counteract Mr. Powell's intention, or their permission, he proposed to add to that clause in the article relative to the parties not being concerned in any other theatre, the words *within ten miles of London*; by the insertion whereof, Mr. Powell would be at liberty to follow his own inclinations, without rendering Mr. Colman responsible for a conduct which he did not approve, and would be glad to find proper means to prevent. As to the separate emoluments of Mr. Powell and himself, he reminded Mess. Rutherford and Harris, that they were no more than they must necessarily pay to other actors and authors; and that, as Mr. Powell and Mr. Colman paid each a fourth of it themselves, their particular advantages from their labours were less than those of others in the same situation; but that, such as they were, if Mess. Harris and Rutherford would * *enact tragedies, or write comedies*, they would be entitled to the like. As to Mr. Colman's § *going so far as to insist warmly on the reasonableness and equity of Mr. Powell's demand of a benefit* on this occasion, it is absolutely false, for which I appeal to Mr. Hutchinson. Such a demand, I really think, after the transaction of the 28th of May, would have been both reasonable and equitable; but, to the best of my knowledge and belief, the mode of compensation was not mentioned, nor any such demand then made by Mr. Powell.

By this time the reader will be tolerably enabled to judge how far the narratives, printed and manuscript, *drawn up by the AUTHORITY* of Mess. Harris and Rutherford, are supported by indubitable and authentic evidence †. Their account of the engagement of Mr. and Mrs. Yates is, in point of exactness and veracity, consistent with the rest of their narration. The very date is erroneous, purposely erroneous, like that of the first material transaction between us. Their Narratives † would insinuate the engagements of Mr. and Mrs. Yates to be subsequent to the transactions of the second of November; thereby meaning to conceal, as they have always most industriously endeavoured, the *real cause* of those violent disputes, and to hold up Miss Ward as the object of contention. She never was, on any occasion, rendered an object of contention; though the note in their Narrative § relative to *some personal altercation, on account of casting the parts of Cymbeline*, expressly says, in direct contradiction to the living testimony of the whole theatre, *Mr. Colman wanting Miss W— to play the part of Imogen; which Harris and Rutherford conceived would be better supplied by Mrs. L—, WHO HAD*

* See printed Narrative, p. 35.
to the printed Narrative.

† See printed Narrative, p. 11.

‡ Ibid. p. 14.

§ See Apology prefixed
Ibid. p. 15.

PLAYED IT THE PRECEDING SEASON AT DRURY LANE. On Mrs. Yates's joining the company however, and refusing to give up the part, it was assigned to neither. The poor flimsy fallacy of their whole representation of this matter must be evident to every person who has read the foregoing pages of this *true* state of the case. Miss Ward's claim to the character had never been set up with an air of contradiction to their sentiments; was never maintained in competition with Mrs. Lessingham; and was wholly withdrawn within eight days after opening the theatre. Mrs. Yates was engaged on the twelfth of October; actually played Jane Shore on the sixteenth; and whether the character of Imogen should be performed by Mrs. Yates or Mrs. Lessingham, was notoriously the whole subject-matter of the violent heats and animosities from the twenty-ninth of October to the second of November. Yet, say Mess. Harris and Rutherford, in their printed narrative, after having concluded their garbled account of those transactions, *The * reconciliation which ENSUED gave Harris and Rutherford some reason to hope that affairs would now be carried on in an amicable manner.* THEY WERE VERY SOON HOWEVER SURPRIZED with Mr. Colman's having taken upon him to engage Mr. and Mrs. Yates: an assertion, in respect to its chronology, which the very authority of the play-bills is sufficient to confute.

Still, however, (say they) Mr. Colman engaged Mr. and Mrs. Yates; and the † *surprise of Harris and Rutherford was the greater, as all the four, IN A CONSULTATION HELD some days before, had been unanimously of a contrary opinion.* The only consultation that I recollect on this affair was, that I had one day the honour of all the proprietors under my roof at dinner; after which the subject was started, I believe by Mr. Powell, who seemed very desirous of forming such an engagement. Mr. Rutherford also seemed to lean to his opinion: I was not wholly disinclined to it, provided we could obtain Mrs. Yates without her husband, whose assistance, excellent as he is, as our company stood, we did not so much need: Mr. Harris was wholly averse to our thinking of either.

It was then generally said that Mr. Barry and Mrs. Dancer were not to return to Dublin; and on the Saturday following the latter was publicly announced, after the play at Drury Lane, to perform there on the succeeding Wednesday. The impatience and anxiety of Mr. Powell could then no longer be subdued. He prest me in the most earnest manner to permit him to enter into a serious negotiation with Mrs. Yates; adding, that he thought I carried my punctilious delicacy towards the managers of Drury Lane much too far; that if Mr. Barry and Mrs. Dancer had crossed the water, and Mrs. Yates had still been standing out upon terms, it would perhaps have been illiberal to interfere; but

that since the managers of Drury Lane had thought proper to take Mr. Barry and Mrs. Dancer into their house, still leaving an opening for Mr. and Mrs. Yates, he did not think, in justice to ourselves, that we ought to omit strengthening our company with so popular an actress as Mrs. Yates. These arguments had, in my opinion, so much weight, that I told him I should be glad to know whether Mrs. Yates would join us *alone*. This, on his application to her, she refused; whereupon Mr. Powell intreated me, if I had the least regard for his peace of mind, or his reputation, to engage *both*. We went together to Mr. Harris's house in Surry Street. Mr. Harris was out of town. We then went to Mr. Rutherford's in Newman Street. Mr. Rutherford also not being to be found, a note was left, requesting the favour of seeing him at the theatre, on earnest business, next morning by ten or eleven o'clock. We waited till near noon, at which time we set out for Mr. Yates's at Mortlake, leaving the following letter from Mr. Powell for Mr. Rutherford. Oct. 11.

"DEAR SIR,

Past Eleven.

"SINCE I had the pleasure to see you, I find that Mr. G—— has engaged B—— and Mrs. D——; and I, yesterday, had the most assured intelligence, that they had complied to give Mr. and Mrs. Y—— their own terms, the consequence of which you must see—that they would do every play in such a manner, with B——, D——, and Y——, that we should not be able to make the least stand against them; and in such case, my reputation as an actor (standing alone) must sink; which to prevent, I would, for my own sake, withdraw myself from the stage, for a time, as an actor. Yesterday I saw Mrs. Y——, who has generously given me the preference, and will not close with Mr. G—— till she hears from me, which must be this morning. The moment I came to town from Mrs. Y—— last night I called with Mr. Colman, at both your houses, in hopes to have consulted and got your consent to engage them. I applied again this morning, but could not have the pleasure to see you. We have now waited to the last moment; it is the very crisis of my fate and fortune; my everlasting welfare is on the engaging these people; and it is Mr. Colman's sentiments, that at all events the moment should not be lost; and I think, when you come to hear how we are beset, you will happily concur. We are now gone to Mortlake to complete it, and hope you will say amen. I am very unhappy till it is done.

Your's,

W. POWELL."

This letter plainly declared that *we were gone to Mortlake to complete the engagement with Mr. and Mrs. Yates*: and that this intelligence was not very unpleasing to Mr. Rutherford; and that *he*, at least, did not then regard it as another gross breach of the articles between us, may be collected from the following note, which I found on my table at my return.

"I Re--

" I Received this instant (my dear friends) Mr. Powell's letter. H. dines with me; and if you have any immediate occasion to recur to us, we are to be found in Newman-street from four to six; shall be at the theatre soon after six; hope to find you both there.

Half past 12, morn.

Yours most sincerely,

J. R.

To G. COLMAN, Esq. or W. POWELL, Esq.

That I did not offer to carry matters with so high a hand, as the gentlemen are pleased to represent, will appear from my answer to the above note.

Monday 4 o'clock. Since returned from Mortlake.

" DEAR FRIEND,

" THE deed is done; done on my part with fear and trembling, because we had not the good fortune to meet with you beforehand; but I think, nay am sure, it is for the best. I have particular company to dinner, or would have flown to you; but will get to the theatre as soon as my company's departure shall release me.

Yours, duly and truly,

G. C.

To J. RUTHERFORD, Esq.

In the evening I went to the theatre; and, from the whole tenor of Mr. Rutherford's behaviour, which was agreeable to the spirit of his letter, I concluded, I still think not without reason, that he was very well satisfied with what we had done, thinking it a measure conducive to the interest and reputation of the theatre. Mr. Harris, however, it must not be dissembled, appeared extremely dissatisfied, construing Mr. Powell's letter as a menace, and declaring his right to think their consent necessary to our forming an engagement of so much expence and consequence †. I acknowledged that right; and assured him that Mr. Powell's letter was not intended as a menace; that, considering the tragick standing army of Drury Lane, occasionally reinforced by Mr. Garrick himself, if we ever meant to use a bowl or a dagger this season, I thought the measure was right; but that if, after all, Mr. Rutherford and himself should declare themselves to be of a contrary opinion, Mr. Powell and myself would cheerfully defray the expence of that engagement, being conscious that there was an irregularity, in having formed it without having previously obtained their assent to it. At length Mr. Powell intreated Mr. Harris, if he had any regard for his (Mr. Powell's) fame or happiness, to shew no farther repugnance to the measure; whereupon Mr. Harris declared he would never say any thing farther against it. How far Mr. Harris has kept his word, or how far Mr. Rutherford's subsequent conduct has been agreeable to

† Printed Narrative, p. 12.

his behaviour at that period, the reader is left to determine; and their objection to this engagement, on account of the expence of it, may be estimated by their conference with Mrs. Yates, as well as their letter to her, on the 29th of October. Whether this engagement has enabled us to add to the publick entertainment, the Publick will judge for themselves.

But here again occurs another instance of collusion; for * Mr. Powell became entitled to the addition of 100 l. to his salary: and it † is to be remarked that Mr. Woodward's engagement was antecedent to Mr. Powell's article; by virtue of which he was entitled to a larger salary than any performer hereafter TO BE engaged. The reader is desired to observe, that Mr. Powell's article with us, as a Performer, was signed, as appears by the date, on the 28th of May, some weeks before we were in possession of the patents; and I will appeal to Mr. Hutchinson before-mentioned, who drew the article, and whose name appears as a witness to it, as well as to the consciences of all the parties who signed it, whether the whole scope and intention of that article was not to secure to Mr. Powell the first salary in the theatre. In what manner a court of law might construe the words TO BE engaged; and how far the casual circumstance of Mr. Woodward's being in articles with the preceding patentees, at a higher salary, might render him an exception; I will not pretend to decide: but before Mr. T. Harris ventures another comparison ‡ between Mr. Powell's disingenuity and his own generosity, we would advise him not to insist on the above construction. Mr. Woodward's excellence in his profession is very well known: but does he, excellent as he is, deserve a superior salary to Mr. Powell? And will any reader of common sense conceive it to be the meaning of any of the parties concerned, to rate Mr. Powell lower than Mr. Woodward?—This, however, is the ground of the black charge of collusion between Mr. Powell and Mr. Colman, by which sinister method they were to add 100 l. to Mr. Powell's salary; fifty of which they were of necessity to pay themselves, and to divide the remaining fifty between them. Add to which, that estimating Mr. Yates's salary at 300 l. which added to that of Mrs. Yates's, amounted to the gross sum of 800 l. Mr. Colman and Mr. Powell, by a most refined stroke of policy, contrived to pay 200 l. each out of their pockets, for the sake of receiving five and twenty. Hence appears the great utility of the narratives of Mess. Harris and Rutherford, who thought it incumbent on them, as well in justification of themselves, as out of respect to the Publick, to prevent, as far as lies in their power, ANY MISREPRESENTATION OF FACTS.

* Printed Narrative, p. 13.

‡ See Apology to their printed Narrative.

† Note to *ibid.*

‡ Note to *ibid.* p. 26.

The relation of these transactions, which naturally fell under the charges of *collusion* and *fraud*, carried on between me and Mr. Powell, has necessarily turned the tide of my narrative, which will now run on, as it began, in the regular course of time.

Jan. 1. 1768. On the first of January the treasurer of the theatre received the following letter:

“S I R,

“YOU have our permission to pay the accustomed weekly salaries, and the incidental charges of music, properties, and supernumerary performers; but you are not to pay any other sum of money whatsoever (Mr. Harris’s fourth part of the balance of cash excepted) unless certified for payment under our hands. We are,

Sir, your most humble Servants,

Surry Street,

Wednesday, Jan. 1st. 1768.

T. HARRIS.

J. RUTHERFORD.

To Mr. JONATHAN GARTON, Treasurer of Covent-Garden Theatre.

As Mess. Harris and Rutherford had, on former occasions, declared, that, sooner than suffer the sordid consideration of interest to controul them, they would see the theatre in flames; we began to think it highly necessary to call in some cool and dispassionate persons, whose interposition might adjust our differences; and to prove that we were in earnest in such an appeal, we thought it the most unquestionable mark of candour, to show ourselves willing to refer the consideration of our differences to the particular friends of Mess. Rutherford and Harris. Indeed we the more readily recurred to this method, having proposed it, as the reader may recollect, not without success, on a former occasion. To avoid, however, the most distant appearance of any clandestine transaction, the following letters, to their friends and to themselves, were dispatched at one and the same instant.

“S I R,

“AS you are a particular friend and acquaintance of Mr. Rutherford, your presence is earnestly requested at the King’s Arms tavern in Cornhill, next Tuesday at one o’clock, to meet some other persons on affairs immediately relative to the most essential interests of Covent-Garden Theatre. We are,

Sir, your most obedient humble Servants,

Jan. 1st. 1768:

G. COLMAN.

Wm. POWELL.”

To CHARLES FOULIS, Esq; at Woodford-Row, Essex.

Others to the same purport, *mutatis mutandis*, to the under-mentioned gentlemen, viz.

Richard Oswald, Esq; Philpot Lane.

Mr. Palmer, Att. at Law, Do.

Mr. Longman, Pater-noster Row.

Mr. Neale, Banker, Lombard Street.

GEN-

" GENTLEMEN,
 " BEING conscious of the rectitude of our conduct, we are willing and desirous to submit it to your most intimate and particular friends; for which purpose we have summoned the under-written gentlemen to the King's Arms tavern in Cornhill next Tuesday at one o'clock, when, if you please, you may attend. We are,
 Gentlemen, your humble Servants,

Jan. 1st. 1768.

G. COLMAN.
 Wm. POWELL."

Charles Foulis, Richard Oswald, *Matthew Duane*,
 Henry Bullock, Thomas Longman, — Neale, — Palmer, Esquires.
 To Mess. RUTHERFORD and HARRIS.

The gentlemen whose names are printed in *Italick characters*, were concerned for the party who had advanced the money to Mr. Powell. On my own part I summoned *nobody*; and Mess. Rutherford and Harris took care, that on their parts *nobody* should appear, except the agents of Mr. Oswald, over whom they could have no influence. On the 5th of January, however, Mr. Powell and I met the other gentlemen at the King's Arms, in Cornhill, when we received the following letter.

" GENTLEMEN.
 " WE have each of us a summons to attend you on the affairs of Covent-Garden Theatre. As we cannot possibly have any right to interfere in this matter, must beg leave to decline the meeting. — Mr. Harris and Mr. Rutherford are gentlemen who, in our opinion, will never act contrary to the principles of honour and right, *or to the tenor of their articles*.

As our friends, we are ever ready to support them to the utmost of our abilities.

Tuesday morning,
 Jan. 5th. 1768.

We are, Gentlemen, your most humble Servants,

CHARLES FOULIS.
 H. J. NEALE.
 THOMAS LONGMAN."

To G. COLMAN, and W. POWELL, Esqs.

The words, *or to the tenor of their articles*, appeared on the receipt of the letter to be added after the rest; and to corroborate our suspicions, they do not appear in the copy exhibited in the printed Narrative*.

This event afforded great matter of triumph to Mess. Harris and Rutherford, as appears by the stile of their letters that immediately succeeded it. For our parts we cannot, to this moment, account for their exultation on this occasion; for what could more testify the weakness of their cause, than their unwillingness to submit it to their particular friends, without any thing on my side, but the plain merits of the question? We are also equally at a loss to account for the conduct of the gentlemen whose names appear at the bottom of the above letter; who not only peremptorily refused to hear the case, which might probably have led to an accommodation; but took upon themselves to prejudge a matter, of which they could not possibly know more than one side of the question.

* See the Narrative, p. 26.

In the mean time Mess. Rutherford and Harris, delighting themselves with the idea of my disappointment, amused themselves with preparing an additional uneasiness and insult for me at my return. To this purpose they took care that I should find an irritating letter on my table, which I was weak and peevish enough to distinguish by an answer, which produced, the very same evening, a reply more insolent than their original epistle. They are here subjoined, according to the order in which they were written.

“ S I R,

“ WE disapprove of the Merchant of Venice having been murdered on Friday night last, which we should have prevented, had we been consulted.—You know, Sir, it is at your *risk* that you order any play, farce, &c. &c. to be exhibited, or that you take any one measure, without previously submitting it to our consideration.

We disapprove of the Recruiting Officer for next Wednesday, unless Miss Macklin is well enough to play Sylvia; fearing some actress (and the pleasure of the Publick) may be as much injured by that character, as Mrs. Bulkley was by playing Portia.

We disapprove of the tragedy of the Orphan, that play having been too often represented this season, to be again performed so soon.

We wish not to go on in sacrificing the pleasure of the Publick; the interest of the theatre, and our whole company of performers, to *one or two of your favourite tragedians*.

Surry Street,
Jan. 5th. 1768.

T. HARRIS.
J. RUTHERFORD.”

“ N. B. We fear the Publick may think the comedy of Every Man in his Humour too often repeated.”

To G. COLMAN, Esq.

“ THE interest of the theatre is in no danger but from *your* conduct and *your* partialities. Mr. Powell, who has a right to give his advice and *assistance* when called on, perceives, that it is not possible for us to keep our doors open, if the director is liable to such frequent and studied interruptions; and we are advised, that no court can ever be led so far to misconstrue the article between us, as to suppose, that the giving you a power that must be so prejudicial to our common interest, could be the intention of it. I shall continue to act in a manner consistent with the spirit of it; I wish you to do the same. As to the rectitude of our conduct, or your own, I shall submit that matter to the Publick, before whom I shall lay a full state of the case in a very few days.

Jan. 5, 1768.

G. C.

“ S I R,

“ THAT the advantage of the theatre is in imminent danger, we cannot but imagine, as we conceive the entertainment of the Publick, and all our own particular interests, to be very much injured by your past conduct, your unjustifiable partialities, and your *collusion* with Mr. Powell. Our proofs we refer to the place where they may be exhibited with efficacy; to urge them to you, however cogent, we are too well convinced would have no effect; and it is the more to be lamented that

that we cannot say you want abilities, but that you *reserve* them for your own private separate emolument, and are endeavouring *our destruction*; but your *dis honour*, and Powell's *ruin*, cannot fail to be the issue of your conduct, as this day's meeting must have rendered obvious to you.

As to your charge of *studied interruptions*, we totally disclaim it; being conscious that we can prove, to every impartial person, that we have never made *them*, but with a view to our joint and respective interests; and we cannot be prevailed on to believe that the Publick will ever espouse the cause of a man who has acted *uniformly inconsistent* with his *articles*, and derogatory to the professions which ought to be more binding to him than articles, his most solemn reiterated promises. It would be but *manly* in you both to exonerate yourselves from obligations you every moment lay under to us, (presume you are acquainted that Mr. R. has proposed to discharge his part of the loan to Mr. Oswald) by finding any one man of property who will take the *burthen* of being security for you both *from* us, who are fearful of the consequence, before you persist in insulting those who have made you both what you are in respect to the theatre.

We dare not take upon us to say what may be the *decision* of a court of judicature; but whatever *that* may be, we shall submit to it with the utmost respect and reverence.

Sir, your humble servants,

Tuesday even. 8 o'clock,
Jan. 5, 1768.

T. HARRIS.
J. RUTHERFORD."

G. COLMAN, Esq.

The next morning, (for now every hour teemed with fresh insults) Mr. Powell received the following.

Jan. 6.

"S I R,

"IN *collusion* with Mr. Colman, you have *dared* to endeavour the alienating the confidence of Gentlemen, whom you *supposed* we were indebted to.

Should we retaliate such *infamous* behaviour, and prevail on one of the first men in the kingdom to undertake a relation of the whole of your *base* conduct respecting us, to a noble lord, to whom, *we know*, you are indebted for your All, (excepting the sum we stand as securities for) how *ought* you to tremble for the consequence?

This from your humble servants,

Surry street, Wednesday Jan. 6, 1768.

T. HARRIS.
J. RUTHERFORD."

To W. POWELL, Esq. at a Musick Shop in *Russel street*, Covent Garden.

In the above letter it is remarkable, that the gentlemen could not restrain their indignation within their letter, but suffered it to overflow, even to the direction; and remembering Tully's maxim, *ex officina nil liberale*, contemptuously reproached Mr. Powell with lodging *at a musick shop*.

The same evening I was honoured with the following :

Jan. 6.

"S I R,

"THE cruel necessity we lay under of holding correspondence with you is exceedingly distressing and dangerous, which we are convinced of from the meeting

of the players, whom you clandestinely convened, and read to them our private letters, though wrote to you in personal confidence, and in the most unguarded manner, some of them on points to which we could only be responsible as man to man.

You have often threatened us to retire from the management. You have often threatened us to appeal to the Publick; nay, you absolutely have had the effrontery to dare an appeal to our friends: the issue of *that* appeal, we believe, still lives in your memory. With respect to the Publick, *our reliance* on their protection cannot be exceeded by *your own*; and we have now by us a *narrative* of our whole proceedings with you, from the first moment to the present time, all ready for publication; but we have been advised by our friends not *immediately* to publish it; and if you do appeal to them, (the Publick) it can only be occasioned by your depending on your art to work upon the *passions* of mankind, and because you dare not wait to abide by their *judgment*, as must be the case in a high court of judicature.

You will urge, perhaps, how much we are obliged to you for the trouble you have given yourself, in taking upon you the whole management of the theatre, and to Mr. Powell for procuring the purchase of all our wardrobe, necessaries, and keeping them afterwards in his own house. From the above circumstances severe injuries have, in the opinion of us both, already arisen to our fortunes, and (the barrier being now entirely destroyed, which was formed for our safety) we dread the future ones.

It is not for us to determine the spirit of our articles from the *letter* of them: that we will not presume to do; but you are conscious—we say, Sir, *you know* that it was our constant, repeated, and uniform declaration, that we would never be concerned with you in the theatre, without having both of us an equality of power with you in the management thereof.

We observe it to be your constant method, when we have objected to a play, that you have ordered a weaker one. *You have no right to order a play for representation before it has been proposed to us.* What can be expected from the play of to-night, weak in itself, and having been already repeated this season to bad houses? The play of to-morrow stands almost in the same predicament. If you say in excuse, *there is no better business ready*, we are very sorry the pleasure of the Publick should be so neglected.

Sir, your humble servants,

Surry street,

Wednesday Jan. 6, 1768.

T. HARRIS.

J. RUTHEFORD.

The two plays referred to in the conclusion of this letter, were the Confederacy, and the Recruiting Officer, acted on the first two nights of the revival of Orpheus and Eurydice. It is a pity the gentlemen chose, in this instance, to prognosticate; for had they staid till they had an account of the *receipts* of those nights, which were very considerable, they might have known *what might be expected from them.*

Agreeable and entertaining as it was, we had neither leisure nor inclination to maintain so polite a correspondence. We desisted, therefore, from taking any notice of their letters, and a kind of sullen silence ensued for some days. In the mean time, the avaricious Colman and collusive Powell were digging in the mine for the benefit of Harris and

Co.

Co. who, while they were eating the bread of our industry and the publick munificence, and the manna was yet in their mouths, like the Israelites in the wilderness, murmured against their feeders.

On the 11th of January, the correspondence was renewed with an assumed air of candour and moderation, which, however, they not being able to sustain, the correspondence broke off a second time. The rise, progress, and conclusion of this resumed correspondence, will appear from the following letters; to which we shall subjoin a few short observations, naturally arising from the letters themselves, as well as from the comments on them in the written and printed Narratives. Jan. 11.

“GENTLEMEN,

“INCLOSED you will receive a copy of Mr. Hoskins’s opinion on our case. As his abilities and integrity in the law are well known to Mr. Colman, we have the greater reliance upon the impression they must necessarily make. This opinion, as well as another we have taken, points out the infallible remedy for redress; yet, like the rest, it advises an adjustment by arbitration, because our dispute (differing from the generality) must be attended with the severest injury to the property litigated, exclusive of the personal expence to be incurred individually. We therefore propose an arbitration of our dispute by four gentlemen, *totally unconcerned in affairs of the Theatre*; two to be nominated by us; unexceptionable in point of rank, fortune and reputation; and impartial, never having been in the least concerned in our affairs.—If you shall both concur in this proposal, and nominate two gentlemen of equal consideration and impartiality, we shall be ready to enter into bonds for submitting to the award of the gentlemen so nominated.—You will see we could not accept or even answer the proposals you made, because you had, without our knowledge, taken upon you to determine who should be judges of our cause; yet reserving to yourselves the liberty of receiving or rejecting their award.

“In case you shall listen to this proposal, we shall not remit the ardor with which we are now prosecuting our suit in Chancery, until the bonds of arbitration are signed. (We mention this, that you may not afterwards imagine there had been duplicity in our conduct.)

“If you shall not listen to this proposal, we shall, besides prosecuting our suit immediately, take such steps, however violent, as will more speedily prevent your managing our property against our consent; being well ascertained, that for whatever damages may accrue, you will be responsible. And we shall have this additional satisfaction arise to our minds, (which we doubt not will also have its weight in a court of judicature) that we are not the authors of the train of mischiefs which must ensue your refusal.

Gentlemen, Your humble servants,

Surry-street,
Monday, 11th Jan.

T. HARRIS.
J. RUTHERFORD.”

To GEO. COLMAN, and WM. POWELL, Esqrs.

“UPON perusal of the case of Mr. H. and Mr. R. and the articles of agreement therein stated, and the letters which have passed between them and Mr. C. I am of opinion that Mr. C. and Mr. P. have been guilty of many material and substantial

stantial breaches of the articles; and particularly with regard to Mr. C. in ordering the play of Cymbeline to be performed, after it had been expressly and positively forbidden by Mr. H. and Mr. R. by writing under their hands, and even after Mr. C. himself, on a *consultation* with them, had agreed to discontinue it. As also in employing and taking into the service of the Theatre Mr. and Mrs. Yates, (especially at so large salaries) not only without the consent of Mr. H. and Mr. R. but even contrary to a resolution wherein he (Mr. C.) himself joined with Mr. H. and R. a few days before.——And with respect to Mr. P. in taking great part of the wardrobe from the Theatre into the particular possession of himself or his wife. And it seems to me, from the conduct of Mr. C. and Mr. P. hitherto, as if they were determined to throw off all regard to the articles, and to act in the management of all matters relating to the Theatre, as sole and entire owners thereof, in absolute exclusion of Mr. H. and Mr. R. from any further concern therein, than to receive their shares of the clear profits thereof.

“ I am also of opinion, that if a bill was to be filed by Mr. H. and Mr. R. against Mr. C. and Mr. P. and his wife in the court of Chancery, that court would decree a *specific performance* of the articles for the future, and would order Mr. C. and Mr. P. to make satisfaction to Mr. H. and Mr. R. for their respective shares of all *damages* which shall appear to have been sustained by any breaches of the articles by them respectively; and would order Mr. P. and his wife to depose in the proper apartments of the Theatre the parts of the wardrobe which they have improperly taken into their possession. And unless matters can be in some manner *amicably* adjusted to the satisfaction of all parties, and a *plan agreed upon for preventing future disputes*, I should advise Mr. H. and Mr. R. forthwith to file a bill in Chancery against Mr. C. and Mr. P. and his wife, for the purposes above.

Lincolns-Inn, Jan. 9th, 1768.

EDMOND HOSKINS.”

Monday afternoon, six o'clock.

“ GENTLEMEN,

“ I HAVE just received your letter with the paper inclosed, both which I shall communicate to Mr. Powell, and doubt not but he will speedily concur with me in giving you a proper answer. In the mean time I should conceive, from Mr. H's opinion, that he has not yet had a *full and impartial state of the case* laid before him.

I am

Your humble servant.

G. COLMAN.”

To Mess. HARRIS and RUTHERFORD.

“ GENTLEMEN,

“ HOW far we have or have not been guilty of any breach of our articles is not for you or ourselves to determine; but we are so fully persuaded of the integrity of our actions, that we are not in the least fearful or unwilling to submit them to a court of judicature, my Lord Chamberlain, or the Publick; nor are we at all intimidated by your menace of more violent measures. Yet as our diffension (however trivial the cause from which it arises) may be serious in its consequence——we are ready to refer to proper persons the care of framing a plan of articles which may prevent future uneasiness. We are, Gentlemen,

Your humble servants,

Jan. 13th, 1768.

G. COLMAN.
W. POWELL.”

To Mess. HARRIS and RUTHERFORD.

GENTLEMEN,

" GENTLEMEN,

" WE wish that your reply to our proposal had been formed in terms more precise and clear, that we might not have lost time in desiring your elucidation of your own writing. We will repeat to you (if possible in more precise terms than before) the question we propose. Will you, with us, submit your and our past conduct to four gentlemen, now and heretofore totally unconcerned with the Theatre; two nominated by you, two by us; unexceptionable in point of rank, fortune, and reputation; and abide by their determination, whether as to award of damages on either side, *ratification of present articles, abolition thereof, and formation of new ones* (if judged necessary and equitable) *and as to all matters relative to the future government of the Theatre?*

Your humble Servants,

Surry Street,
Wednesday, Jan. 13th. 1768.

T. HARRIS.
J. RUTHERFORD."

To G. COLMAN, and W. POWELL, Esqs.

" GENTLEMEN,

" OUT of tenderness to yourselves, we forbore to enter into any past transactions, as an enquiry of that nature must necessarily lay open the real cause of the unhappy difference between us; nor indeed is any thing material to the general interest and happiness, but a proper arrangement of matters for the future. We proposed therefore (and we now repeat the proposal) to refer to proper persons the care of settling the articles in such a manner, that the management of the Theatre may be carried on to the satisfaction of all parties; nor have we any objection, if you think it eligible, to submit our past conduct to the consideration of the same persons; confident as we are that, in the opinion of any unprejudiced judge, we shall be found to have deserved a very different treatment than we have met with from you.

Your humble Servants,

Jan. 14th. 1768.

G. COLMAN.
Wm. POWELL."

" GENTLEMEN,

" OF late we have wrote you in the most clear, precise terms, upon an affair of the utmost importance to our property. That part of your answer which, at another time, would have excited our mirth, now causes our indignation.—Out with your tenderness! we totally disclaim it, and condemn your pretences to it. In our present situation, all we could wish is, that the whole of our past transactions were known to the world.

We now refer to our former question for your plain and unevasive answer, and subjoin the following:

Have you fixed on two gentlemen under the description we proposed? and will you direct your attorney to meet ours, and form some instrument that may effectually bind all parties to abide by the award?

If you desire that we should nominate first, we have no objection. It is unmanly to give us evasive answers.—One to the purpose, or none. We are,

Gentlemen, your humble Servants,

Surry Street,
Friday morn. Jan. 15th. 1768.

T. HARRIS.
J. RUTHERFORD."

To G. COLMAN, and W. POWELL, Esqs.

" GENTLEMEN,

" THE stile of your letters makes it as impossible to hold an epistolary correspondence with you, as to maintain a personal intercourse.—If you will be pleased to favour us with the name and address of your attorney, we will appoint one to attend him.

Your humble Servants,

G. COLMAN.
Wm. POWELL."

To Mess. H. and R.

" GENTLEMEN,

" MR. Coulthard, of Breems-Buildings, Chancery-Lane, is our solicitor, to whom we refer you for our future intentions.

Your humble Servants,

Surry Street,
Friday evening, Jan. 15th. 1768.

T. HARRIS.
J. RUTHERFORD."

To G. COLMAN, and W. POWELL, Esqs.

" GENTLEMEN,

" AS the delay of payment of our tradesmen must be very detrimental to the credit and interest of the Theatre, we desire to know your resolutions concerning the bills now in your hands, which ought to have been discharged some time ago; and the rather, as the non-payment of those bills is the only obstacle to the satisfying Mr. Oswald's claim of interest due to him on his mortgage.

Your humble Servants,

Jan. 16th,
1768.

G. COLMAN.
Wm. POWELL."

To T. HARRIS, and J. RUTHERFORD, Esqs.

" GENTLEMEN,

" WE received your's of the 16th instant. It is thought advisable you should have notice, that on the first general settlement of our accounts, each respective proprietor will be deemed to have received so much money as the orders issued by him, or by his direction, may amount to, in part of his proportion of the dividend due to him on the profits of the theatre. We are, Gentlemen,

Your humble servants,

Surry street,
Frid. Jan. 19, 1768.

T. HARRIS.
J. RUTHERFORD."

GEO. COLMAN, and WILL. POWELL, Esqs.

" S. I R,

" WE have inclosed to you (except two or three) all the bills in our possession, either signed, or an observation made thereon.

For the credit of the theatre we have passed those bills to you, but think proper to reserve to ourselves the right of claiming for any prejudice that may have arisen to our property by the payment of those bills.

We think proper also to advise you, that the orders for admission to the theatre, issued by the proprietors, or by their direction, as well those heretofore given as those which may be hereafter given, we shall expect to be accounted for as cash by the respective proprietors.

We

WE are extremely sorry that any disputes should contribute to the increase of trouble in your office, and shall take every opportunity of rendering your situation as secure and agreeable as possible, and are, Sir, Your most humble servants,

Surry-street,
Tuesd. Jan. 19, 1768.

T. HARRIS.
J. RUTHERFORD."

To Mr. GARTON.

After a perusal of the above letters, wherein it is proposed to submit to arbitrators, *the abolition of the present articles, or formation of new*, the reader will think it strange, that Mess. Rutherford and Harris should complain of our ASSURANCE, in *proposing the new-modelling present articles, or the framing of new ones* †! Strange, however, as it may appear, their agent declared to our own, that Mess. Harris and Rutherford had no intention to assent to the abolition or formation of articles.

The day after Mr. Garton received the letter, directing him to charge as cash the orders for admission to the theatre, issued by the several Proprietors, or by their direction; Mr. Garton, at my desire, waited on Mr. Harris, to know if He and Mr. Rutherford meant to restrain the Performers from occasionally giving orders to their friends, as usual? Mr. Harris replied, that it was an established privilege, of which neither Mr. Rutherford nor himself ever wished or intended to deprive them. So that the only persons who were not to be allowed that privilege were, it seems, the Proprietors themselves.

In the first of the above letters, Mess. Harris and Rutherford, with the same spirit of openness and ingenuity that has shone through all their conduct, transmitted to me a copy of a learned counsel's opinion, without sending me, at the same time, a copy of the case whereon that opinion was given; and how far I wronged those gentlemen in *affecting to think, ‡ that a fair and impartial state of the case had not been laid before the counsel*; those who have compared this plain tale with their tales, may easily determine. The client who deceives his counsel, ultimately deceives himself; but the truth is, that the chief object in view was, to draw from some eminent counsel such an opinion, as might serve to bow my mind to truckle to the slavery which they would impose upon me; for the reader must, by this time, be convinced, that in the short space of my theatrical direction, every method of insult and intimidation has been used to drive me to sacrifice our property, and the credit and interest of the theatre, to their partialities, and the caprice and vanity of Mrs. Lessingham; of which my submitting to take the part of Mrs. Sullen, in the Stratagem, from Mrs. Bolkley, in favour of

† Printed Narrative, p. 33.

‡ Ibid. 31.

Mrs. Lessingham, is an instance of which I sorely repent, and for which I am still, to use one of their favourite figures, *burning with shame*. The case laid before their counsel, as plainly appears from the references to it in the opinion, contained the same charges, supported by the same evidence, that are urged against us in their printed and manuscript libels. Their Narratives, indeed, and the case submitted to counsel, are materially, and substantially, one and the same; first transmitted to counsel by a hackney-writer of one sort, and then dressed up for publick inspection by a hackney-writer of another.

Still, however, it is urged *that the court of Chancery would decree a specifick performance of the articles*. I do not doubt but it would. But give me leave to ask those gentlemen, and even their counsel, what is *a specifick performance* of the articles? Is it that I am not to carry on the ordinary business of the Theatre without previously submitting *at all times*, every minute particular to their consideration and controul? Is not the acting manager to appoint, or, from the contingencies of sickness or other accidents, to alter a play appointed for representation, without their previous concern? Is he not to cast the parts of a single play, bespeak a single dress, or occasionally substitute Mrs. Bulkley for Miss Macklin, without sending at eight or nine o'clock in the evening to Mr. Rutherford in Newman-street, and to Mr. Harris in Surry-street? If this be *a specifick performance*, as the above letters construe it to be, it leaves the director less power than is commonly and necessarily lodged in the Prompter: and I cannot suppose that the wisdom and equity of the noblest court of judicature in the world will solemnly decree such *a specifick performance*, as the nature of the case renders impossible to be put in execution.

Granting, however, for argument sake, that the court would even decree *a specifick performance* of that sort, for which *the narrators* contend, give me leave to ask another question: Must not *their negative power* be always exercised in the *first* instance? and can they, after having openly or tacitly concurred in a measure, capriciously retract that concurrence? After having not only approved, but *desired*, the representation of *Cymbeline*; after having consented to the expensive decoration of it; had they a right, not only on the eve of its representation, but even after the representation of it at the Command of Their Majesties, to prohibit the repetition of it? If this be, as they assert, their *indubitable right to a negative voice*, by the same indubitable right they might restrain me from opening our doors; and after the lengths to which they have proceeded, I should not be at all surprized at their attempting to exercise their *negative power* in that manner.

† Printed Narrative, p. 30.

But then the Court would order Mess. Colman and Powell to make satisfaction to Harris and Rutherford for their respective shares of all DAMAGES which should appear to have been sustained by any breach of those articles by them respectively. Undoubtedly ; and it would be pleasant to be called on for damages in the present instance in any court of judicature. It is a cause worthy to come on before Trappolin. Make out a panel from the pit, and ask any twelve on the jury, what damages they think have arisen to Covent-Garden Theatre this season from the addition of Mr. and Mrs. Yates to the company ? ask the Treasurer of the Theatre, what damages have arisen from the representation of Cymbeline ? ask the wardrobe-keepers, and other officers of the Theatre, what damages appear to have been sustained by any breach of articles by Mess. Colman and Powell respectively ? If in all these instances, nothing but necessary expences, fairly brought to account, appear on one hand ; if great benefit to the property appears to have arisen on the other ; alas ! poor Powell, what will become of thee ? alas ! poor Colman, what will become of thee ! *Solventur risu tabulae : Tu missus abibis.*

The words *effrontery* and *assurance* are favourite terms in the polite vocabulary of Mess. Harris and Rutherford. They assert they verily believe they have incurred a loss of no less than 3500*l.* by Colman's mismanagement. What does the world think of their modesty ?

To talk of damages is a very serious matter. Suppose, by a capricious display of their negative power, damages should arise ; would not the other proprietors, would not every performer of the Theatre, if injured by such conduct, have a right to call judicially upon Mess. Harris and Rutherford to make good such damages ?

As to the real intention of the restrictive clause in the article, and the declared object of it, at the time of its execution, it was merely to reserve a provisional power of restraint, which they then declared would probably not be exercised once in seven years, and very possibly would never be exercised at all. Nay, they avow themselves that they † entertained no doubt of Mr. Colman's capacity or inclination to conduct the theatre to the best advantage ; so that the negative clause was added, only lest any sinister accident might render their interposition necessary to the security of their property‡.—*Nec Deus interfit, nisi dignus vindice nodus*—seems to have been the meaning of all parties. Has the *dignus vindice nodus* yet occurred ? And has any SINISTER ACCIDENT rendered their interposition necessary, except the representation of the character of Imogen by Mrs. Yates, instead of Mrs. Lessingham ?

† Printed Narrative, p. 3.

‡ Ibid.

The truth is, and they have confessed it, that the two *gentlemen managers* meant to avail themselves of the talents of William Powell *the player*, and George Colman *the dramatick author*. To this end they chearfully subscribed, although not indefinitely, to my abilities for the province of director; and Mr. Powell did not scruple to give up his share of the *positive power*, thinking it safely lodged in my hands. Still, however, they had secured to themselves a *negative power*, which, instead of reserving till the end of *seven years*, the reader has seen they not only exerted, but *exceeded*, before the end of *seven days*. The force of the restrictive clause is not questioned; and it is certain, that if they chuse to counteract their own interests for the sake of abridging my authority, they have frequent opportunities to embarrass me in the theatrical management. **How comes it then*, say they in triumph, *that Mr. Colman, a GENTLEMAN BRED IN THE STUDY OF THE LAW, should enter into such absurd articles?* The history of the memorable visit with which I was honoured by Mr. Harris, on my return from Bath, is a full answer to their question. There are quirks in morality, as well as quirks in the law; but I did not conceive that I was dealing with a petty-fogger in either.

As to my management of the theatre, of my merit or demerit in that particular, the Publick are the most competent judges; but it ill becomes my fellow-patentees to suggest matter of reproof on that subject to the person who is said to be their *historiographer*; and it ill becomes him to revile me for my *gratuitous* services, while he is said to be himself a candidate to represent us all four as a *stipendiary* manager. Mr. Spatter, if it be Mr. Spatter, is "one of those wretches who *miscall* themselves authors; a fellow, whose heart, and tongue, and pen, are equally scandalous; who tries to insinuate himself every where, to make mischief if there is none, and to increase it if he finds any." Mr. Kenrick, the ingenious author of the *Widowed Wife*, and of the candid and gentleman-like *Review of Dr. Johnson's Shakespeare*, has been pleased to pay me a very particular compliment in the prologue to his most excellent dramatick performance; and I will refer it to that gentleman, unless perhaps he may be thought *partial*, whether Mr. Spatter, or myself, is the fittest person to be employed in the direction of a theatre. Mr. Spatter perhaps may flatter himself with the hopes of expelling me from the management, and of seating himself, by the assistance of his friends, in the vacant chair; but Mr. Spatter is mistaken. Let him, if he pleases, make rules for experimental philosophers in his trade of brass-rule-maker: let him make rules for authors in his profession of Monthly Reviewer; but never, while Mr. Powell and myself are concerned in the property, shall he *openly* make rules for the management of Covent Garden theatre.

We are told, however, that † *the proprietors of a theatre may avail themselves, not only of players, poets, &c. but even of MANAGERS, if necessary, on paying them a valuable consideration.*—Here the cloven foot appears: and to confirm this doctrine, it is observed, that ‡ *Mr. Colman's not stipulating for such a consideration, when he accepted of the NOMINAL DIRECTORSHIP of the theatre, is a corroborating proof that it was never intended he should take more trouble than Harris and Rutherford: as, had it been otherwise, he would certainly have been as much entitled to a salary for managing, as Mr. Powell was to his salary for acting.* Here we cannot help observing in our turn, that the *acting manager*, in the beginning of the Narrative, is reduced to the *nominal director* at the end. That I have as reasonable a claim to a salary for managing, as Mr. Powell for acting, is most certain; and indeed in some respects the claim is more reasonable, as the acting-manager incurs, in many instances, an unavoidable expence: but that *it was never intended I should take more trouble than Harris and Rutherford*, is false on the very face of the article. After their interpretation of Mr. Powell's article, I am not in the least surprized at their candid construction of the disinterestedness of mine; and the insinuation of *sinister views in my unrequested officiousness*, is as true as it is generous. How far I was officious, or how far I was requested to take the office, is now before the Publick.

They are pleased to call *the more than ordinary profits of the theatre this season, an imaginary circumstance.* That the receipts of the theatre this season have been larger than ordinary, is NOT *an imaginary circumstance*, but a *real fact*: and if the disbursements have also been larger than ordinary, owing to our moderate efforts, as Mess. Harris and Rutherford are pleased to call them, to entertain the Publick, those gentlemen ought to know, that the first expences of *setting up in business* are not to be calculated as the average expences of the current year.

* *Sensible as they are of the disadvantages they lie under*, Mess. Rutherford and Harris do not, however, seem averse to enter into a *comparative view of the abilities of the respective patentees*; and have employed the latter pages of their publication to convince the town of their error, in having been pleased to bestow so much § *generous approbation on such moderate entertainment, as they have received at Covent Garden Theatre this season.* We hope, however, that our united efforts, moderate as Mess. Harris and Rutherford are pleased to call them, will still continue to be honoured with the GENEROUS APPROBATION OF THE PUBLICK. We flatter ourselves, that a fair comparison between the Narratives of Mess. Rutherford and Harris, and our own, will not inspire our patrons with

† Mess. H. and R's Narr. p. 35.

‡ Note to Ibid. p. 36.

* Ibid. p. 35. § Ibid. p. 37.

any resentment of our proceedings. They may now judge, which two of the patentees have been † *in perfect collusion from first to last*; which have been § *very avaricious*; and whether personal pique to Mrs. Lessingham on my side, or personal attachment to Mrs. Lessingham on the part of Mess. Harris and Rutherford, has appeared in the *rise and progress* of our *disputes*. Her name, which is scarce distantly alluded to in their Narratives, makes a very conspicuous figure in our State of the Case; and might have been rendered still more capital. On the whole, if we shall not have appeared to have acted || *in despite of honour and honesty*, if we shall have appeared to have spared neither expence nor pains in our efforts to entertain, we hope still to be favoured with the prosperous gale of the publick favour; and although it is not easy to keep the helm in such a boisterous sea, yet we hope, by *plain sailing*, to be able to run before the wind, and that the ship will live in a storm.

As to THEIR *sincere desire of contributing to the publick entertainment*, that cannot be questioned; not only as it is their immediate interest, but as they have so notoriously manifested that desire by their loud and vehement complaints of * *the heavy losses sustained by the engagement of Mrs. Yates, and the incredible expence of her dresses*, as well as other theatrical decorations: not to mention their assignment of principal characters to Mrs. Lessingham, instead of Mrs. Yates.

† *Absurd as it is to suppose men in the least acquainted with BUSINESS, unequal to the care and conduct of their property in a Theatre*, it is a most certain fact, that from a particular innate modesty, or some other commendable motive, Mess. Harris and Rutherford have never once shewn themselves at all disposed to interfere in the *executive* part of the management. Their talent is legislation. While Powell and Colman were seen every day, and almost every hour in the day, toiling in the drudgery of rehearsing, and decorating the intended performances; while they, like petty kings, were *staged and backed in the eyes* of the whole Theatre; in the mean time Mess. Harris and Rutherford kept, like Eastern monarchs, from their sight; never attempting to assist the director in his management, but now and then, to render his situation more agreeable, ¶ *exerting their undoubted right to controul him in that province*; occasionally exercising, and sometimes exceeding, their *negative power*; but never disturbing or degrading their high and mighty councils, by treating with authors or actors, *getting up plays*, or *purchasing old cloaths*.

But they are to be assisted by persons of known experience and abilities; and it was not till this very moment that I have learned from Mr. Becket, sent to me for that purpose, that these persons

Feb. 10.
1768.

† See Introduction, p. 4.
† Mess. H. and R.'s Narr. p. 37.

§ Ibid.
¶ Ibid. p. 35.

|| Ibid. p. 5.

* Ibid. p. 4, 5.

of known experience and abilities are Mr. WILLIAM KENRICK, and Mr. HENRY WOODWARD; the first of whom has commissioned Mr. Becket to inform me, that Mess. Harris and Rutherford, though *they flatter † themselves they will not be found incapable of superintending their property*, intend, however, for the future, to absent themselves entirely from the Theatre; and that he (Mr. Kenrick *) is to be the representative of Mr. Harris, and Mr. Woodward of Mr. Rutherford; in which quality Mr. Woodward and Mr. Kenrick are, in behalf of Mess. Harris and Rutherford, to *put THEIR negative* on such of my measures as they shall please to disapprove. How far a court of law will warrant this proceeding, and whether a manager, like a militia-man, can act by a substitute, I will not take upon me to decide; but whether this new arrangement is not intended as a fresh insult, we submit, with the rest of our case, to that awful tribunal, THE PUBLICK.

Covent-Garden,
February 10, 1768.

GEORGE COLMAN.
WILLIAM POWELL.

† Mess. H. and R's Narrative, p. 37.

* It is not improper to mention here, that Mr. Lockyer Davis, of Holborn, bookseller, called on me on Monday afternoon, immediately from Mr. Kenrick, to acquaint me, that Mr. Kenrick had authority from Mess. Harris and Rutherford to say, that, *notwithstanding the publication of their Narrative on Saturday*, they were disposed to enter into a treaty for an accommodation, if I was inclined to listen to it. I answered, that I could listen to no terms of accommodation till I had published a state of the case, in justification of my character.

WILLIAM POWELL.
GEORGE COLMAN.

1. I was invited to the office of the Director of the Bureau of the Census, Washington, D. C., in the month of May, 1941, for the purpose of discussing the proposed revision of the Census of the United States, 1940. I was invited to the office of the Director of the Bureau of the Census, Washington, D. C., in the month of May, 1941, for the purpose of discussing the proposed revision of the Census of the United States, 1940. I was invited to the office of the Director of the Bureau of the Census, Washington, D. C., in the month of May, 1941, for the purpose of discussing the proposed revision of the Census of the United States, 1940.